

The Society of Antiquaries

Kelmscott Manor & Estate Conservation Management Plan

November 2013



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1. Introduction

1.1 Authorship

This plan has been written by John Maddison and Merlin Waterson. It is derived from the Conservation Plan prepared in 2004/5 by Nicholas Cooper on which it relies for much historical and technical information and from which it incorporates substantial amounts of text, notably in the gazetteers and in the architectural description of Kelmscott Manor. The authors would like to acknowledge their debt to Nicholas Cooper in the writing of this plan and to record their grateful thanks for the help that he has given. Others who have contributed in different ways to the preparation of this document are recorded below (1.8).

1.2 The Society of Antiquaries

The Society's mission is: 'the encouragement, advancement and furtherance of the study and knowledge of the antiquities and history of this and other countries (Royal Charter 1751). The strategic objectives of the Society are: 1. To conserve and develop the research and educational potential of the buildings, collections and library at Burlington House and Kelmscott Manor and to make these resources more accessible to Fellows and the wider public 2. To engage, enthuse and foster the Fellowship and staff in pursuing the aims of the Society to further our understanding of the past and influence the heritage sector and the general public 3. To ensure the Society remains fit to meet its objectives now and in the future.'

1.3 The need for a Conservation Management Plan

The Kelmscott Estate is the only collection of amenity land and historic buildings in the ownership of the Society of Antiquaries.

Since its acquisition in 1962 the Kelmscott estate has been run as a going concern, deriving income from visitors and from rented property. It has no endowment and any annual deficits are met by the general funds of the Antiquaries.

It is a small but complex property with a long history in which one episode, the occupation by William Morris and his family, is of overwhelming historical and cultural importance. The Manor, as it was found by Morris and subsequently furnished and tended by him and by his heirs, is a composite work of art, archaeology and landscape. It presents curatorial challenges that require a structured, informed and sympathetic response.

Owners of historic properties are obliged to look for effective commercial returns to support their long-term preservation. A broad range of visitors - from school children to retired people - have widely differing expectations and needs. These needs can only be accommodated responsibly in ways that support the property without detriment to its essential character and significance. Even conservation measures and curatorial strategies can sometimes have unforeseen negative consequences for the core values of historic buildings and landscape. A Conservation Management Plan is a means by which core values can be clearly identified and measures for their protection and enhancement can be formulated, agreed and adopted. It is a document in which conflicting requirements can be assessed, prioritised and where possible reconciled.

1.4 The Scope of the Conservation Management Plan

This plan deals with the whole of the Society of Antiquaries Kelmscott Estate and all the heritage assets which it includes. The Heritage Lottery Fund sees such plans as the first step in any significant development of historic properties. But although this plan has been written according to the HLF guidelines,

it has not been devised in relation to any intended scheme of development which could introduce an element of bias into certain judgements and assessments. At certain points it considers ways in which new schemes might be explored but it is not intended as a definitive prescription for future development at Kelmscott. Its aim is, rather, to establish the agreed conservation considerations and aims within which such a strategy should be devised and to suggest possible approaches. In this way future plans will have firm foundations and, it is hoped, gather support from all those that have an interest in Kelmscott Manor and in the cultural legacy of William Morris.

1.5 Background

It is half a century since the Society acquired Kelmscott and rescued it from an advanced state of decay. The work was exemplary in its time in every respect, and the arrangement of the Manor at that period has remained substantially unchanged. The house gives great pleasure to visitors and is widely loved and admired.

The professional care of historic houses and their contents was in the 1960s a rapidly evolving discipline whose development in more recent years has transformed understanding and expectations. Conservation both traditional and scientific has made considerable advances. The presentation of historic interiors has become more fastidious in its pursuit of authenticity. Carefully researched and sometimes theatrical reconstructions of ensembles have been created in some historic buildings (e.g. Dover Castle : English Heritage). In others minimal intervention and preservation as found have been considered the most appropriate policy (Calke Abbey and Chastleton: the National Trust). In some the forensic reconstruction of lost or compromised interiors is part of an ongoing programme of restoration work (Sir John Soane's Museum). Properties that have long been in public ownership and which have already been through a substantial earlier campaign of preservation and presentation are numerous. In most of them the work of the early period of ownership has involved the removal of historic material and made alterations in earlier arrangements. In this Kelmscott is no exception.

Significant and developing changes in the presentation of Morris material at Red House, now the property of the National Trust, and in the William Morris Gallery at Walthamstow provide an opportunity to bring greater clarity to what the Society offers to the public at Kelmscott. Rather than attempting to recount Morris's achievements in all their diversity, it is now possible to concentrate on what Kelmscott meant to Morris and how that in turn shaped his later work. That is one strand and arguably the most important in terms of the subsequent history of our culture. The other is the property as it developed in the life of Jane and May Morris after the great man's death in 1896, when the numerous contents of the London home, Kelmscott House in Hammersmith, came into the Manor. They included highly significant items and associated memories from Morris's youthful beginnings, from Queen Square and Red House and perhaps some additional chattels from the Chelsea home of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Additional material came from 8 Hammersmith Terrace, the London home of May Morris in 1923. It needs to be recognized that Kelmscott is now the only Morris family house where a substantial quantity of the original contents remain. Even here they have been subject to extensive re-arrangement and their architectural setting has also been significantly altered. Evidence for earlier states is extensive and the Society has the opportunity to recover them. In some rooms this may present difficulties, so a selective and pragmatic approach may be sensible, but if we are to be faithful to Kelmscott's known history then a return to something closer to the Morris family house must be the objective. The care and presentation of Kelmscott is therefore complicated and challenging for the Society but it is of great interest to the public and to academics alike. The reinstatement of some of the property's historic arrangements may increase its local and national profile.

That having been said it is neither desirable nor practical for the Society to attract greatly increased numbers to this relatively small and fragile house. The Society cannot appeal to a mass membership nor deploy a huge marketing machine. It can however offer visitors an experience that allows them the time, space and tranquility to appreciate a property of subtle beauty and complex historical significance. This significance is primarily the role it

played in formulating Morris's ideas about society, how to live and what in our built and natural environment we should value, protect and nourish.

Although the ideas in which Morris came to believe so strongly have changed the way we live, they are by no means fixed in the national consciousness. Current arguments about the place of the arts in education, and the vigorous public debate about the National Planning Policy Framework and the preservation of the heritage are proof that the battles that Morris began are still being fought. These matters are of vital interest to the Society of Antiquaries for whom Morris, relentless campaigner for the protection and understanding of historic material culture, should be a figure of inspiration.

How then is the Society to widen the participation of the public in the experience of Kelmscott Manor without threatening its core values? School visits will continue to feature significantly but major growth in this area will be difficult to sustain. Kelmscott however provides an opportunity for carefully directed participation and partnerships. For example the Society has the opportunity to engage with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and academic institutions to show how Morris transformed the theory and practice of conservation and design. It can also engage with local schools, colleges, universities and the public to encourage the appreciation of historic architecture in surrounding churches, and in the vernacular buildings of the local villages and farms which were of great importance to Morris. Outreach programmes are one way in which this vulnerable property can raise awareness and increase access not merely in relation to itself but to the rich heritage of the countryside that brought Morris to this place. Improving the already good website is another way in which the property and its remarkable contents can be shared with an unlimited audience. The National Trust owns land and buildings in the village of Kelmscott. There is an opportunity here for co-operation both in the preservation and enhancement of the village and in other areas of management and outreach.

Visitor facilities at Kelmscott have not kept pace with a recent increase in numbers of visitors. The increase is just about sustainable at the moment but it is evident that the public goodwill

generated by the property and its loyal staff and volunteers forgives some rather primitive and *ad hoc* expedients which might not be acceptable in other places. Finally the pattern of open days, which has developed gradually from its very modest early beginnings into what is still a restrictive and unusually limited arrangement, needs to be reconsidered and improved. Research into visitor expectations and preferences should inform such a reconsideration. In any progressive scheme, conservation and access need to be kept in balance. That is why this plan also touches on visiting and access.

1.6 The Structure of the Conservation Management Plan

This plan follows a conventional and widely used conservation plan structure in which splits into four sections in which the various aspects of the property are considered from four separate and distinct viewpoints. The first is Understanding in which the basic physical and historical facts are established. This is followed by Significance in which the same matters are considered in relation to their cultural meaning and heritage value. The third section, entitled Issues, identifies any problems, challenges and opportunities associated with these individual subjects, while the final section, Policies, suggests how some of these issues might be resolved and recommends future action.

The last part of the plan is the gazetteer in which individual landscape areas, buildings and rooms are given the same treatment. In this case the four areas of discussion follow one another in relation to each place.

1.7 Underlying Principles: outline policies

Underlying this discussion is a set of principles or assumptions, which are listed below.

- I. The Society of Antiquaries is committed, through ownership, to the long-term preservation of Kelmscott Manor and its estate.

2. The proper care of the buildings, historic contents and landscape setting is the first responsibility of the Society's stewardship at Kelmscott.
3. In addition to the protection of physical assets this embodies those qualities of peace, remoteness and beauty that are an integral part of its essential historic character. These are qualities which could be damaged by commercial exploitation and over-visiting.
4. Guarding against decay and loss encompasses timely repair, regular maintenance and adequate precautions against fire and flood (including effective and current disaster recovery plans).
5. Conservation methods, both active and preventive, will match the highest professional standards currently employed in the care of historic houses.
6. The Society will be guided by the principles of conservation that Morris articulated, and which continue to be advocated by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. In practice this implies a policy of not attempting conjectural restoration and a presumption that later accretions will be respected. This policy will be combined with the practical pragmatism that Morris showed in his works of conservation and adaptation.¹
7. Security measures against theft and criminal damage will be robust and subject to regular review.
8. There will be a strong presumption against the alienation of indigenous heritage assets whether chattels, buildings or land.
9. Public access to Kelmscott is central to the purposes of the Society. Therefore the property will be open to public visiting in a manner that is consistent with its long-term preservation, security and financial wellbeing.
10. As a learned body the Society has the responsibility and the expertise to research the history of its property at Kelmscott and publish its findings.
11. Research will be used to inform a clear and objective view of the significance of Kelmscott Manor and its estate and to guide all decisions on its management, conservation and presentation.
12. The presentation of the property will be the result of a coherent rationale, which will be made public. This will be informed by knowledge of the history and significance of the property, and of contemporary interpretative strategies and techniques but will always favour methods sympathetic to Kelmscott and adapted to its individual domestic character and needs.
13. The long-term financial stability of the property will be addressed by an effective business plan encompassing all aspects of its income, expenditure and administration. The purpose of such a plan is to deliver the objectives set out above and to make the property, as far as is possible, financially self-supporting for long-term preservation.
14. Grant aid from government agencies and from charitable trusts, as well legacies and gifts, have a major part to play in the preservation of Kelmscott Manor and its estate. The Society will have a pro-active and strategic policy towards the securing of these important funding sources especially for capital works.
15. Any capital development at the property will be consistent with the conservation objectives identified above and be sustainable in the long-term in relation to staffing and maintenance costs.
16. The Society will have a clear statement of Kelmscott's role in the delivery of its core objectives and of the present and potential benefits that it offers to the Society. This includes contact with the public, a focus for research and recognition of the example of William Morris in the application of

1 E.g. his attitude to the repair and alteration of Kelmscott church, Crossley, Hassall and Salway 2007, pp.56-67.

antiquarian knowledge for contemporary social and cultural development.

17. The Society's staffing structure both at the property and at Burlington House will allow the efficient delivery of these principal objectives.

1.8 Stakeholders and consultation procedure.

The following have been consulted during the writing of the Conservation Plan:

- Staff at Kelmscott Manor
- Volunteers at Kelmscott Manor
- Staff at Burlington House
- The Honorary Curator
- Nicholas Cooper FSA
- Paul Richold, architect (Architecton)

The following have been invited to comment on the first draft of the document:

- The Kelmscott Advisory Committee
- Staff at Kelmscott Manor
- Staff at Burlington House
- The Honorary Curator
- Nicholas Cooper FSA

The revised draft has been read and approved by the Council of the Society of Antiquaries and this draft has been issued for comment to the following:

- Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries
- Volunteers at Kelmscott Manor
- Residents of the village of Kelmscott and neighbouring landowners e.g The National Trust
- Local authorities
- National statutory bodies including English Heritage, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the Victorian Society
- The William Morris Network

This process has produced a significant number of constructive suggestions as well as corrections and additions which the authors have incorporated with gratitude.

2. The Kelmscott Estate: layout, composition and designations

2.1 Layout and Composition

The estate lies next to the river Thames on the southern edge of the Oxfordshire village of Kelmscott, close to the Gloucestershire border, two miles east of Lechlade. Grid Reference SU25018 98997. Post Code GL7 3HJ.

It includes the Manor House and its garden, a farmstead with an important group of historic barns, dovecot, stabling and other buildings, five cottages, and a series of paddocks and meadows stretching from the river to the centre of the village. It covers approximately 12.5 acres.

2.2 Statutory designations and planning policies affecting the estate.

Listed Buildings

- Kelmscott Manor House (Grade 1)
- 1 & 2 Memorial Cottages with attached outbuildings & garden walls (Grade 2*)
- 1 & 4 Manor Cottages (Grade 2*)
- Stone slab fence enclosing & dividing gardens of 1/4 Manor Cottages, & extending along roadside to Manor Garden Cottage (Grade 2)
- Manor Garden Cottage (Grade 2)
- Manor garden walls with attached summerhouse & privy (Grade 2)
- South Road barn (Grade 2)
- South-east (tea room) barn (Grade 2)
- Dovecot (Grade 2)
- North road barn (Grade 2)
- Paddock barn (Grade 2)

Conservation Area

- Designated in 1995. The whole of the Antiquaries' estate is contained within the West Oxfordshire District Council's Kelmscott Conservation Area.

Local Plan

- The village of Kelmscott is covered by the West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan.

Other Designations

- Manor Gardens & West Meadow: English Heritage Register of Historic Parks & Gardens (non-statutory).
- Adjoining land to the west is a Scheduled Ancient Monument by virtue of crop marks.
- The whole estate is included in the Upper Thames Valley Environmentally sensitive Area.

Registered Museum Status

The contents of Kelmscott Manor form part of the collection of the Society of Antiquaries which have had full Accreditation status since 2009 (now administered by Arts Council England).



Fig. 2 The Thames at Kelmscott



Fig. 3 The Village of Kelmscott looking across the central field

3. Understanding Kelmscott Manor and its Estate

This section of the plan deals with the history and character of the property in all its aspects. It begins with its wider topographical setting.

3.1 Overall landscape character, environment and ecology

Landscape History

The countryside around the upper Thames is relatively flat and open. It is the product of human activity over millennia. The clearance of woodland began in the Neolithic period, around 4,000 BC. The Manor itself stands on the first of several gravel terraces. To the south are the unimproved meadows of the Thames floodplain. The gravel terraces to the north and east have evidence of farming activity from before the first millennium BC. Open field farming, whose boundaries are still indicated by ancient watercourses, persisted at Kelmscott until the Parliamentary enclosures of 1799.

Landscape Character

The property owned by the Society comprises neutral grassland, semi-natural broad-leaved woodland, gardens and buildings. Many of the plants and trees which appear in Morris's designs are still present, including willows, orchids, thistles and hawthorn. Others, such as the once abundant fritillaries so loved by Morris, are scarce and are clinging on only at the margins. Disease in the 1960s destroyed all the large Elms which were such a distinctive feature of this part of Oxfordshire although they survive as suckers in hedgerows and other places.²

Habitats and Ecology

None of the Society's property is designated a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest', nor is the importance of its natural history reflected in any statutory designations.

A detailed survey of the ecology of the Society's property was carried out in 2008 and its findings are available in the report published by 'Just Ecology' in July of that year. The survey makes detailed management recommendations, which are summarised in the section on Landscape Policy.

3.2 Archaeology

The countryside around Kelmscott is rich in cropmarks and the evidence of open fields, ancient pit clusters, house gullies, enclosures, trackways and other monuments. These features testify to the working of the gravel terraces of the upper Thames valley before, during and after the Roman period. The earliest phases are of the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Proximity to the Thames made Kelmscott an obvious site for agricultural activity over millennia.

On land adjoining that owned by the Society, there are areas which are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, on account of these cropmarks.

Beneath the buildings owned by the SAL and in the surrounding meadows there is almost certainly evidence of very early agricultural activity and settlement.

The Manor and the barns at Kelmscott are themselves antiquities meriting archaeological analysis and conservation in an exemplary way.³

² Mark Robinson, 'The Environmental Archaeology and Historical Ecology of Kelmscott' in Crossley, Hassall and Salway (2007) p.29.

³ See Steve Baker 'A Place for Digging Ditches: Cropmarks around Kelmscott' in Crossley, Hassall and Salway 2007, pp 15-28.



Fig. 4 The Society of Antiquaries Kelmscott Estate - buildings

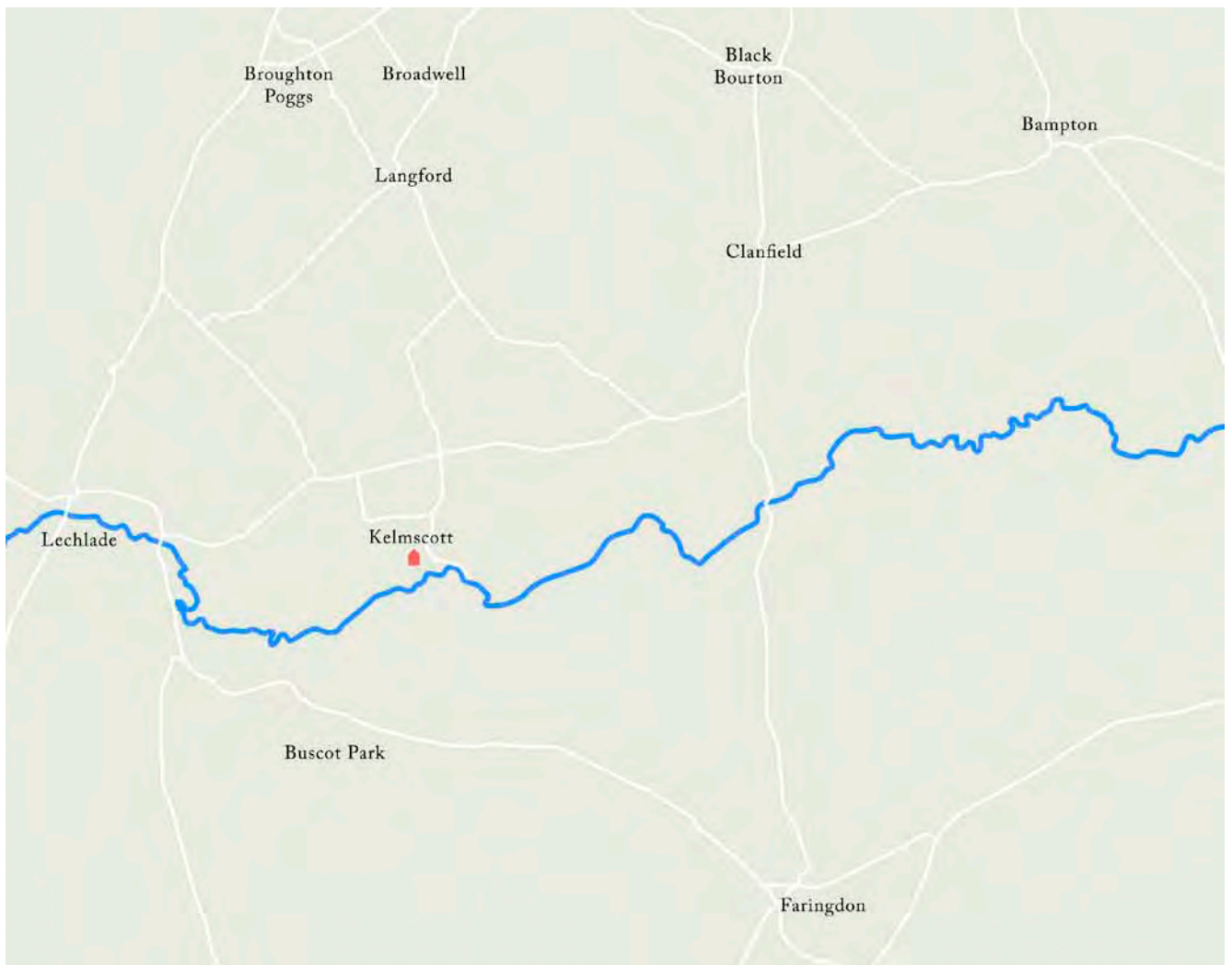


Fig. 5 Kelmscott and its immediate locality

3.3 The Manor in the context of the village: community and buildings

The place-name is Anglo-Saxon (Coenhelm's cott) and first recorded in the thirteenth century but the earliest physical evidence for medieval settlement here is the parish church which is probably a twelfth-century foundation and is notable for its thirteenth-century and later medieval architecture and its wall paintings.

The village may have been an outlying low-status settlement associated with the large Saxon estate of the royal manor and minster of Bampton. Later in the Middle Ages it became a detached part of the large manor of Broadwell.

In 1279 there were 28 households but population declined until the sixteenth century when the existing pattern of land holding began to shift from a peasant community holding land of a single manor to a small group of wealthy tenant farmers and freeholders among whom the Turner family, the builders of Kelmscott Manor, emerged as the dominant family.

The Manor did not acquire its name until 1864 when James Turner purchased the manorial title but it appears to be the earliest and the largest farmhouse in the village. Until this time it was known simply as 'The Lower House'. The way in which the Turner family memorials dominate the chancel of the parish church however indicates their elevated local status.

The architectural evidence of the other aspiring minor gentry is a small group of fine early farmhouses : Manor farm (c. 1700); Home Farm (late eighteenth century); Bradshaw's Farm (1750s) and Lower House Farm (late seventeenth century) . Plough Cottages carry the date 1690 and the initials of John and Mary Turner (thought to have been the owners of Manor Farm.)

In the second half of the 19th century James Turner, who at one point farmed 480 acres in and around the village, was succeeded by Robert Hobbs who was to lease the Manor to William Morris. Until the 1960s the landholding in the village was divided between his fields and those of Manor farm.

The farm labourers whose numbers rose to a peak of 179 in 1841, had no land of their own. The increased numbers were accommodated by the subdivision of the existing housing stock rather than new building. Around 1872 the new National School was built opposite the parish church. May Morris is known to have bought a group of cottages to protect the accommodation for farm labourers. She and her mother each put up a pair of semi-detached memorial cottages to increase the local housing stock. In the 1950's a row of council houses was built in a style sympathetic to the architecture of the village by a mason who worked for the neighbouring reforming landlord Stafford Cripps. Advances in mechanized agriculture and property prices have in recent years completely changed the social demography of the village.⁴

The acquisition of the Manor by the Society of Antiquaries gave it a new role as a significant potential tourist attraction. It continues however to have a close relationship with the village, letting pieces of land to individuals, housing members of the community and providing local employment. The detailed story of this relationship, both positive and negative, will be discoverable from the Society's correspondence files.

3.4 Kelmscott Manor: early owners and occupants: The Turner and Hobbs families

Asterisks indicate occupants of the Manor.

The house appears to have been built early in the seventeenth century by a certain Thomas Turner. The Turner family and their relations were among the principal landowners in Kelmscott from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, farming there and in neighbouring parishes.

Andrew Turner, d.1594

Known to have owned property in Kelmscott, divided on death between his son Thomas and his widow Izard.

⁴ This account is largely a summary of Simon Townley, 'Medieval and Modern Settlement at Kelmscott' in Crossley, Hassall and Salway 2007, pp. 39-55.

*Thomas & Anne Turner, d.1611**

A lost deed of 1816 describes Kelmscott Manor as 'the capital messuage in Kelmscott, erected by Thomas Turner upon the toft where two messuages formerly stood.'⁵ The inventory⁶ taken on the death of Thomas Turner, heir to Andrew Turner, describes a (possibly new built) house of similar size and amenities to Kelmscott Manor which may plausibly be identified with it. On his death, his property was divided between his widow Anne and his daughters Izard and Elizabeth.

Elizabeth and Izard Turner

Co-heirs of Thomas Turner. Elizabeth Turner married Thomas Huntslow of Chadlington;⁷ no record has been found of the marriage or death of Izard Turner. The disposal of their property is unknown, but it is likely that the house was sold or otherwise disposed of.

Thomas Turner (of Filkins), d.1663

It is uncertain how this Thomas Turner acquired Kelmscott Manor, but he lived at Filkins and is thus almost certainly not the builder of the house. However, the present house was clearly among the property inherited by his son Thomas⁸ (described as the son of Thomas Turner of Filkins in a deed of 1666).⁹

*Thomas Turner (of Kelmscott), d.1682**

Already resident at Kelmscott before the death of his father. Described as 'gentleman'; married Anna, da. of Sir Thomas Faulcons of Derbyshire, and received grant of arms in 1665.¹⁰ Died in London at his house in Tower Street.¹¹

*Thomas Turner, d.1709**

Thomas Turner married twice, having three children by each of his wives. His Kelmscott property passed successively to his children by his first wife, his Filkins property going to his children by the second.

Thomas, Charles* and George Turner*, to 1734. Thomas Ford**

The children of Thomas Turner [d.1709] by his first wife. All died childless, George (d.1734) leaving the house to the use of his relatives. The three children of Thomas Turner's second wife also dying childless, the house passed to the descendants of John Turner, younger son of Thomas Turner [d.1663]. When George Turner died in 1734, the service end of the house had been let to Thomas Ford on a twelve year lease of which six years remained.

*John Turner d.1783**

*James Turner d. ? **

*Charles Turner d.1833**

James Turner d.1869, Elizabeth Turner (widow) d.1883¹²*

James Turner bought the lordship of the manor in 1864.¹³

Charles Hobbs d.1895

Inherited the Manor House through marriage to Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Turner (d.1833). Leased the Manor to William Morris for £75 p.a.

R.W.Hobbs 1895-1913

Leased the Manor to Jane Morris for £66 p.a., to whom the freehold of the house was sold following his death.

5 SAL Kelmscott deeds Box 1: 2.10.1816. Two houses are mentioned in Andrew Turner's will of 1594, one occupied by Henry Hall bequeathed to his son Thomas, the other divided between Thomas and Andrew's widow, Izard. [ORO 190.49].

6 ORO Wills Oxon 65/3/29. Repr. in Pt.2.

7 ORO Kelmscott marriage register. It is assumed that this is the Elizabeth Turner in question; on the other hand Thomas Huntslow d. at Chadlington in 1641 appointed his 'brother' Robert Turner of Kelmscott overseer [will ORO 32/2/109]. No house identifiable as Kelmscott Manor is named in his will.

8 PRO PROB11/312 f.245 will: Thomas Turner of Filkins.

9 SA Kelmscott deeds Box 6: 21.6.1666.

10 BL Harl 1105 f.20b.

11 PRO PROB11/370 f.81v.

12 1851-61 censuses: PRO HO107/1687 (1851); RG9/728 (1861).

13 VJ.Hollands 60-9.



Fig. 6 Kelmscott Church: interior



Fig. 7 Turner family ledgers in the Chancel



Fig. 8 The Morris family grave in the Kelmscott Churchyard, designed by Philip Webb

3.5 Kelmscott Manor: William Morris, his family and related occupants.

William Morris June 1871-1896; D.G.Rossetti* June 1871-July 1874; F.S.Ellis* 1874-1884*

William Morris and D.G.Rossetti took a joint tenancy of the Manor House in June 1871. Morris departed for Iceland in July, returning in October of that year and making a second visit in 1873. Rossetti gave up his tenancy in July 1874 to F.S.Ellis who retained it until 1884.¹⁴ Morris took on the lease ostensibly for the sake of his children's health but it has been suggested that his hidden motive was 'an attempt to find a civilized *modus vivendi* for Morris, Janey and Rossetti, giving the triangle a stamp of permanence and at least a veneer of respectability.'¹⁵

Rossetti, who had been in very poor health both physically and mentally, only abandoned his tenancy after Morris had signalled that he would resign his own, following his return from his second trip to Iceland in 1874. Without the cover of Morris's joint tenancy Jane and Rossetti could no longer cohabit with any degree of respectability.¹⁶ Ellis, the new co-tenant was Morris's publisher.

Rossetti's response to Kelmscott was initially very similar to that of Morris. Quoting Tennyson's *The Palace of Art* (1832) he called it 'this loveliest haunt of ancient peace' and repeated this quotation several times in his early letters from Kelmscott. He made clear that it was the house and its garden which he found so appealing, rather than the village or the wider landscape. Rossetti took an active interest in the early furnishing of Kelmscott and its decoration. Early letters refer to the acquisition of furniture and the mixing of the green paint which underlies much of the later decoration in the house.¹⁷

At no time did William Morris live permanently at Kelmscott. He used it chiefly in the summer and autumn both for work and relaxation but

importantly it was the place that he regarded as home. Morris's deep attachment to Kelmscott and its meaning for his work is discussed in Significance. His wife and children spent longer amounts of time there, making it their home after Morris's death.

No other resident is known until 1891,¹⁸ when it was occupied by Francis Harding* as caretaker and gardener, his wife Mary* as cook, their baby daughter Olive*, and Mary Ashley*, aged 14, 'general servant and domestic.' It is uncertain whether Mr.& Mrs. Giles, caretakers from 1887, lived in.

*Jane Morris 1871-1914**

Jane Morris inherited the lease of the Manor House on her husband's death in 1896. She and her daughters moved to Kelmscott having, in 1897 and let their London home, Kelmscott House Hammersmith, to H.C. Marrillier (who with W.A.S.Benson had acquired Morris and Co). It was at this point that the sparse furnishings of Kelmscott Manor were supplemented by the more luxurious and exotic contents of the London house.

After her husband's death Jane built Philip Webb's Memorial Cottages in memory of Morris (see below The Cottages of the Estate).

The trustees of the Morris bequest bought the freehold of Kelmscott Manor and its outlying land in the village in 1913 to provide security for Jane, then 74 and within three months of her death.¹⁹

May Morris 1871-October 1938; M.F.V.Lobb c.1917-March 1939**

May Morris had spent many of her childhood summers at Kelmscott. At the outset of her brief marriage to Harry Sparling in 1890 she acquired No 8, Hammersmith Terrace. Following her mother's death May spent increasing periods of time at Kelmscott, retaining Hammersmith Terrace, until 1923. From 1917 she shared Kelmscott Manor with Mary Lobb whom she had

¹⁴ Kelvin, 19., I, xxxviii.

¹⁵ F.MacCarthy, *William Morris*, 275

¹⁶ Jan Marsh, *Jane and May Morris*, 128

¹⁷ Charlotte Gere, *Artistic Circles*, 2010, p.168. For Rossetti's letters from Kelmscott see W. E. Fredeman *The Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: The Last Decade, 1873-1882* (2006)

¹⁸ 1891 Census RG12/975.

¹⁹ Frank. C. Sharp and Jan Marsh *Three Collected Letters of Jane Morris* (2012) provide insights in to Jane's occupation of the Manor, her ambivalent feelings about it and her contribution to its decoration, arrangement and upkeep.

befriended when she came to the village to work on a local farm in the Women's National Land Service Corps.

May Commissioned 1 and 4 Manor Cottages, Kelmscott from Ernest Gimson in 1914 as a memorial to her mother and in 1934 put in hand the building of the Morris Memorial Hall also to designs by Gimson, a project on which they had first embarked in 1918. It grew out of an idea of her mother's formulated as early as 1897 (but then supplanted by the Morris Memorial Cottages).

Her will left Kelmscott Manor and its estate to Oxford University naming the Society of Antiquaries as residuary legatee.

3.6 Kelmscott Manor: Ownership by Oxford University

In 1939 Oxford University acquired the estate of May Morris under the terms of her will which included a life interest to Mary Lobb. Following the death of Mary Lobb, the house was repaired, altered and let to:

*E. Scott-Snell** 1939-1950²⁰
Art Master at Radley College.

John Betjeman 1950-1951
Though the University's tenant, Betjeman never occupied Kelmscott Manor himself but sub-let it to Mr.& Mrs. Bernard Quail*.

*D.C. Wren** 1951-1963
The University undertook some repairs and alterations at the property. The provisions of May Morris's will stipulated that the Manor should become a house of rest for artists, men

of letters etc. on the one hand and on the other an unchanged memorial to her father. These provisions were seen by the University to be in conflict. It proved difficult to maintain the property with the funds provided in the will and the estate income was inadequate. Moreover the restrictive provisions of the will with regard to Kelmscott's historic furnishings were not found to be consistent with a marketable lease. The estate having thus become a liability, the University issued a summons against the Society of Antiquaries named in the will as residuary legatee.

3.7 Kelmscott Manor: Ownership by the Society of Antiquaries

On 24th January 1962 Mr Justice Plowman ruled that the ownership of Kelmscott devolved upon the Society of Antiquaries but, accepting the arguments of the Society's barrister, declared the charitable provisions of May Morris's bequest to Oxford University invalid. In this way the estate passed to the Society of Antiquaries free of the restrictions that had complicated its ownership by the University.

A.R. Dufty, at that time Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, and the President, Joan Evans, dealt with the enforced transfer of ownership. The financial burden represented by Kelmscott was well beyond the Society's means and the Executive Committee instructed Dufty to put the property on the market. In the week following this decision Joan Evans mentioned the predicament to her niece, Susan Minet, whose solicitors subsequently contacted the Society to communicate her gift of shares worth £350,000. This gift was made without restrictions on its use.

An extensive programme of repair and alteration consumed only £40,000 of the Minet gift. After repairs and alterations, the Manor was occupied for a time by Dufty, some time President of the Society. After he terminated his tenancy, the house was occupied by a resident custodian and this arrangement continued with successive custodians until 2010 when the property managers moved into Garden Cottage.

20 Edward Scott-Snell (1912-1988), occupied the Manor first with his mother, Margaret Scott-Snell, a friend of May Morris, and then his wife, Stephanie Godwin (1917-2006), whose surname he adopted but then divorced in 1955. They published a fictionalised life of Morris, *Warrior Bard* (1947), which they claimed to have been approved by Mary, and occupied the house at least from 1940 to 1947. Their papers at Colgate University Libraries (Hamilton, New York; ref. M 3007), contain much in the way of Kelmscottiana, including photographs. (Information from Simon Jervis).



Fig. 9 D. G Rossetti's portrait of Jane Morris *The Blue Silk Dress* hanging in the Panelled Room at Kelmscott



Fig. 10 The Morris Memorial Hall, Ernest Gimson 1934 (this building does not belong to the society)

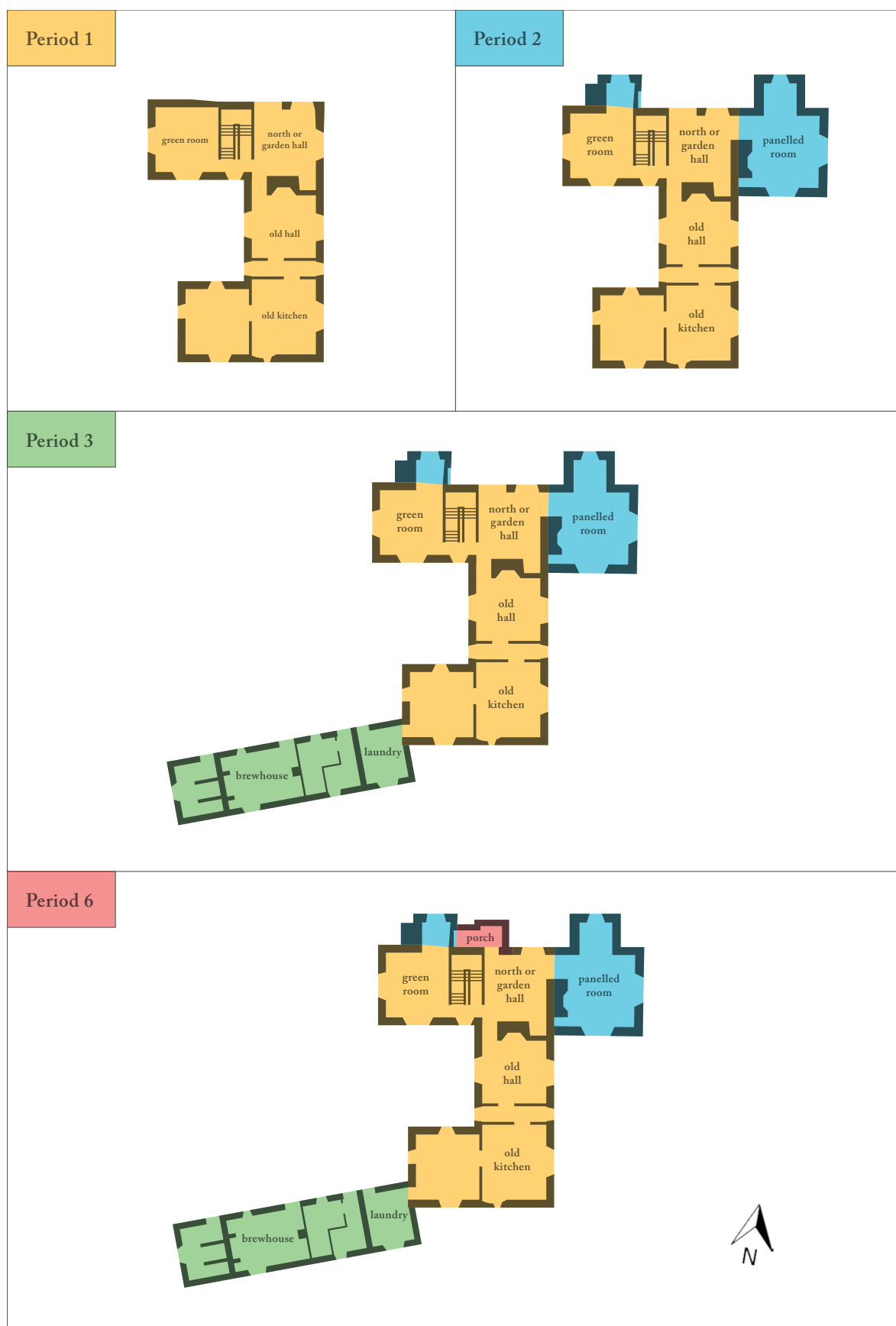


Fig. 11 Kelmscott Manor: ground plans showing the three principal building periods

The initiative for the Society's acceptance and restoration of the house came from Dufty, who directed the repair work of 1964-7 on the Society's behalf. It was moreover Dufty who secured the acquisition of the Manor's farm buildings, which had belonged to the Church Commissioners since 1905. He wrote the essential account of the Society's acquisition of the estate and its restoration work.²¹

3.8 The Fabric of the Manor House

A full description of the architectural development of the house by Nicholas Cooper and of its alteration by successive owners is to be found in the Gazetteer from which the following summary is extracted.²²

Period 1: Early Seventeenth century

Architectural detail suggests that the earliest part of the house may be of the early seventeenth century.²³ A deed of 1834, evidently repeating a formula from an earlier document now lost, describes a certain Thomas Turner as having been the builder of the house, and the surviving portions of the original building appear to correspond closely in size and arrangement to the house described in the inventory of Thomas Turner (d.1611).

The early house was built to a U-plan, with wings projecting west. The central range, a single room deep, contains the hall with entrance through a screens passage at its southern end; there were two service rooms to the south and two parlours to the north with a principal stair between them rising in two flights to the first floor. A second stair at the south end rises from ground floor to attics. The first floor contained five chambers; the attic

floor seems to have been open from north to south forming a species of simple gallery, perhaps with the wings partitioned off. The house was gabled to east and west; gables to the central range have been heightened.

In all essentials, this house remains.

Period 2: c.1665-70

The house was altered and enlarged, probably around 1665-70, by Thomas Turner (d.1682) whose coat of arms appears on fireplaces in two rooms. The work may have been occasioned by his marriage with the daughter of a knight and by the grant of arms in 1665.

These works added a new parlour/chamber wing to the east of the north end of the house. This was built for prestige as well as for additional space: it has floors and ceilings at a higher level than those of the earlier building, and each outer face is crowned by a line of gablets with pedimented architraves to windows.

This phase also saw the building of a two-storey closet bay on the north face of the north-west parlour; perhaps the rebuilding of the kitchen chimney stack and secondary stair on the south front; and the raising of the central gables over the central (hall) range to east and west.

This work remains substantially intact.

Period 3a & 3b: Early Eighteenth century

Minor alterations were undertaken in the early eighteenth century. This work included the installation of overmantel and wainscot in the NE parlour and the addition of a single-storeyed service range extending the SW wing. This period also saw the temporary division of the house in c.1728, (see Kelmscott Manor early owners and occupants: George Turner) probably S of the screens passage on the ground floor and S of the Hall chamber on the first floor which necessitated the insertion of a stair from first floor to attic in the northern part of the house, in the space now occupied by the w.c. Thomas Ford occupied kitchen, two butteries, a

21 Antiquaries' Journal, XLIII, 1963.

22 His chapter, 'Kelmscott Manor', in Crossley, Hassall and Salway (2007) p.110 provides a fuller context.

23 All principal timbers are of elm, and tree-ring dating is therefore not practicable.

chamber called Mr.Castle's room, maid's chamber, two garrets over them, brewhouse and dairy house.²⁴

At some unknown date, certain windows of the house were blocked.

Beyond the Period 1 SW wing a further single-storeyed service wing extends further W. This is probably of the eighteenth century but the exact date is not known. Nor is it known why the alignment does not follow that of the main body of the house.

Period 4: Nineteenth to early twentieth century

Nineteenth century work seems to have been minor, and little of it remains. Some work is known to have been done by William and Jane Morris. For details see Gazetteer.

Period 5: Twentieth century: work for Oxford University 1939-40

When Oxford University acquired the house in 1939, repairs and improvements were needed so that the house might be let. This work was undertaken under the direction of T.G.Davidson, FSA, FRIBA, of Whiteleaf, Aylesbury, Bucks. It is not known how much repair was undertaken as distinct from alterations. For details see Gazetteer.

Period 6a & 6b: Twentieth century: Work for the Society of Antiquaries 1964-7; 1970s-2004

When the Society of Antiquaries acquired the house in 1962 the house was in a poor state of repair, while additional work was needed to facilitate opening to the public and to improve accommodation within the house for a resident caretaker. The work was carried out by Donald Insall and Associates, architects, under the

supervision of Peter Locke, RIBA. Donald Insall wrote of the need to separate the domestic quarters from the show rooms.

'The solution was happily quite straightforward and involved no new physical barrier between the two halves of the house. At the north end, a new porch entry for visitors was added, designed in the still valid Cotswold vernacular. This restores the doorway to its former and rightful position, and incorporates a small cloakroom for the use of visitors. To give access to the attic from the north end of the upper floor, a split stair was inserted of the only type that would go in the space available. These arrangements enable the visitor to leave at the north end thus maintaining the privacy of the domestic south section of the house.'

For details of this work see Gazetteer.

3.9 The interiors of the Manor: arrangement and use

The Interiors: Phases

The evolution of the interiors fall into six main phases:

- The rooms which formed part of the house built by Thomas Turner between 1594 and 1611, i.e. the Old Hall, Screen's Passage, Garden Hall, Green Room, Old Kitchen, New Kitchen and the rooms above.
- The rooms added by his grandson, also Thomas Turner, in c. 1665 to 1670, i.e. the Panelled Room and the Tapestry Room.
- The early eighteenth-century interiors, and the service wing.
- The very modest alterations made by William and Jane Morris.
- The more extensive work for Oxford University between 1939 and 1962, for the convenience of their tenants.
- Work for the Society, from 1962 to the present, including the major repairs undertaken by Donald Insall and alterations initiated by Dick Dufty.

24 PRO PROB.11/665 f.376 George Turner of Kelmscott. The date of 1728 is inferred from the fact that on George Turner's death in 1734, Ford had six years remaining of a 12-year lease.



Fig. 12 The west front of the Manor from the courtyard



Fig. 13 The north-east wing

This divided the house into show rooms and custodians' accommodation and made significant alterations to the Old Hall, Green Room, the North Hall and the Tapestry Room, the creation of an enclosed porch and W.C. to the north and the insertion of a new stair from the first floor to the attics.

3.10 The contents of the Manor: collections

Categories of contents

The historic collections at Kelmscott are of exceptional artistic, decorative and literary interest.

They fall into 5 main categories:

- Items associated with the Turner family, which remained at Kelmscott when Morris and Rossetti took the lease. The most significant are the seventeenth-century tapestries in the Tapestry Room and staircase and the gate-leg table now in the Old Hall.
- Items introduced by Morris during his lifetime about which relatively little is known and for which the main evidence is found in the photographs of F.H.Evans of 1896/7.
- Items in the house that were once owned by Rossetti, several of which are noted in the memorandum of the contents of the Manor by May Morris (see below and gazetteer). These may in some cases have been left after he surrendered the lease. Others may have been acquired by Jane after his death in 1882 either for Kelmscott or for Kelmscott House, Hammersmith.
- Items brought to Kelmscott after Morris's death in 1896 by Jane and May Morris from No 8. Hammersmith Terrace, or donated to the Manor during their lifetimes most of which are recorded in the May Morris memorandum and remain in the house. These included a number of pieces made for Red House.
- Items associated with Morris and acquired by the Society after 1962.

Historic Inventories

Historic inventories of the contents survive from the following years:

- 1611, on the death of the builder
- 1833
- 1870 on the eve of Morris's occupation
- 1926, part of a memorandum attached to May Morris's Will, listing room-by-room the items which she wanted to have preserved at Kelmscott. A selective list is reproduced in Parry, p.98 and the entries are recorded verbatim (from the full document) room-by-room in the gazetteer that forms part of this plan.
- 1939 The inventory taken by Hobbs and Chambers, auctioneers, after Mary Lobb's death.
- 1939 Catalogue of the *Sale of a large portion of the Furnishings and Effects, removed from Kelmscott Manor, the home of William Morris ...* July 19th 20th 1939 Hobbs and Chambers.

Early Images of the Interiors

The early arrangement of the rooms at Kelmscott is recorded in photographs by Henry Taunt, F.H. Evans, Country Life, the NMR and others. There are watercolours of the interiors by May Morris and Mary Ann Sloane and drawings by E.H.New. Many of the most significant watercolours are illustrated in Parry (1996) and Crossley (2007). Photographs recording recent changes are kept at Burlington House.

Conservation reports are with the files at Kelmscott and Burlington House. In 1995 a report on 'Visitor Capacity and preventive Conservation at Kelmscott' was prepared by Helen Lloyd, Housekeeper to the National Trust.

3.11 The Manor gardens

Garden: Compartments

The Kelmscott gardens are made up of five connected compartments, grouped around the Manor, comprising (described anti-clockwise):

- The Front (east) garden, which perpetuates the frontispiece of *News from Nowhere*, of 1893. The drawing on which the woodcut is based was made by Charles March Gere in 1892, and amended in response to detailed comments in letters from William Morris.
- The Lawn Garden, formerly the Kitchen Garden.
- The Orchard, planted with historic varieties of apple trees and with a white mulberry and tulip tree.
- The Mulberry Garden, largely a recreation in 1994 of the planting recorded in a photograph of 1925.
- The Privy Garden. A small vegetable garden adjoining the privy, which is probably eighteenth century.

The Garden: History

The history of the garden falls into five main phases:

- The early seventeenth-century garden created around the house built by Thomas Turner. Very little evidence of this remains, although garden archaeology might establish whether there was a knot garden or other formal schemes. Such research would be of academic, rather than practical value.
- The garden discovered by Morris and described in *News from Nowhere* and in his letters.
- The garden enjoyed by Morris and his family, until the death of May Morris in 1938.
- The garden simplified, and with much planting lost, between 1938 and 1994.
- The garden as restored by the Society in 1994 and maintained in accordance with the policies agreed then.²⁵

²⁵ Most of the essential information on, and images of, the garden are in Hal Moggridge's *The 'Restoration of Kelmscott Manor Gardens'*, in Crossley, Hassall and Salway 2007, p 146. Moggridge explains the evidence for the restoration carried out by the SAL in 1994.

Garden Structures

The boundary walls are of different periods and the study of their different masonry systems is rewarding. Those on the west boundary step down to give a view of the Manor Paddock and are topped with relatively modern iron railings introduced to replace an early timber palisade of a nineteenth century 'Queen Anne' type (eg. the fences in Bedford Park, Chiswick) shown in an early photograph of 1885 (Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum) and of which a piece remains in the south byre of the Granary. The ensemble was intact in the photograph in the 1977 guidebook.

In the East Garden is a timber summer house and next to the Mulberry Garden an eighteenth-century stone-built privy (see gazetteer for details).

3.12 The buildings of the farmyard

In 1833 the farm buildings were (with other buildings) part of the farm owned by Charles Turner, occupier of the Manor House, and are included in the inventory of his possessions at his death. Not all the buildings can be identified with certainty, but it is possible that further research may make their identification clearer. They do not, however, appear in the inventory of James Turner who occupied the Manor House at his death in 1869 (Part II, 3), since they then belonged to Charles Hobbs. It is possible that there is further information about them in Charles Hobbs's papers (at the Museum of English Rural Life, Reading) or in those of the Church Commissioners, their later owners.

The farmyard and its buildings were not part of the May Morris bequest to Oxford University but were acquired for the Society of Antiquaries on advantageous terms by A.R.Duffy.

The farm yards lie south of the house, and are in two parts, a barn yard to the east, and a rick yard to the west. Home Yard and Home Rick Yard are named in Charles Turner's inventory (see above) and probably distinguish their location from those further afield. Both of these yards are flanked on the south by a backwater of the river Thames.



Fig. 14 Aerial view of Kelmscott Manor by E. H. New c.1890

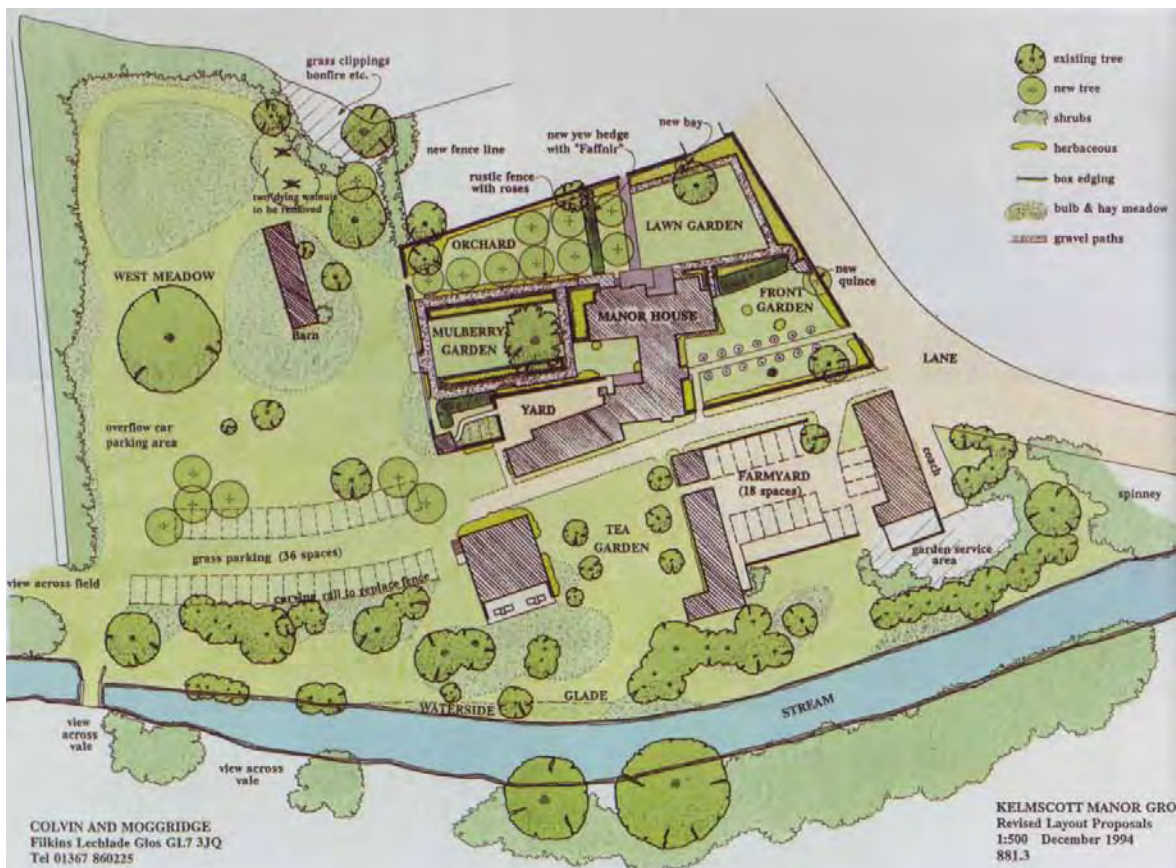


Fig. 15 Garden Plan by Colvin and Moggridge 1994 (from Crossley, Hassall and Salway (2007))

A rick is shown in the Rick Yard in E.H.New's bird's-eye view of 1892.

New's view and early 1:25,000 maps also show byres in the home yard. The southern of these was demolished at an unknown date, the northern (then in a poor condition) in 1973.

The surviving buildings include two large seventeenth-century stone barns and a contemporary dovecot, a nineteenth-century brick and stone granary and attached byres, a timber-framed seventeenth-century barn in the meadow and a good eighteenth-century threshing barn to the north of the garden as well as two small structures. (See gazetteer for details and image.)

3.13 The buildings of the estate: cottages

The estate includes five cottages.

Manor Garden Cottage

Manor Garden Cottage is a stone rubble-built cottage of two storeys with a slate roof, and probably of seventeenth-century date extended in the eighteenth century.

1 & 2 Memorial Cottages

A semi-detached pair, commissioned by Jane Morris as a memorial to William Morris and built to the design of Philip Webb in 1902. Stone, of coursed rubble with ashlar dressings and stone slates. At the centre of the front gable is a carved plaque by George Jack after a drawing by Webb showing Morris sitting beneath a tree in the grounds of Kelmscott Manor.²⁶

These are outstanding examples of the work of Philip Webb and his last architectural works.

1 & 4 Manor Cottages

Commissioned in 1914 by May Morris as a memorial to her parents and built by Ernest Gimson as an L-shaped semi-detached pair. Stone, of rubble with ashlar dressings and stone slates. The stack bears a commemorative inscription.

These Gimson cottages are most important examples of the Arts and Crafts vernacular revival of which Gimson was one of the most significant practitioners.

Both sets of cottages together with the Morris Memorial Hall (outside the ownership of SAL) represent the Morris family's determination to provide a permanent memorial to William Morris. May's editing of the first edition of her father's collected works and the eventual gift of the estate and the Manor together with her establishment of the William and Jane Morris fund for the repair of churches under the aegis of the Society of Antiquaries completed this task.

In the vicinity of the cottages are two small stone barns (one used as a garage) and a converted railway carriage.

(2 & 3 Manor Cottages, an L-shaped block, formerly of four cottages, altered in 1966 to form two, were sold by the Society of Antiquaries in 2005/6).

3.14 The history of visitor access and management: commercial activities and other services

The Morris Years

Morris was gregarious by nature, and part of the appeal of Kelmscott was that he imagined it as a place of happiness and fulfilment, filled with friends. The house of his imagination is most powerfully evoked in 'News from Nowhere', in which the heroes of the novel discover it as if by chance and are then able to wander around its deserted rooms.

26 Lethaby 219

The reality of visiting Kelmscott was more problematical, because of the tangled relationships of those staying there. During the winter months Morris sometimes visited the house on his own, relishing the discomfort.²⁷ When Rossetti finally surrendered his tenancy in 1874 it became easier for Morris to be there with his friends, most frequently Philip Webb, Sydney Cockerell, Edward and Georgie Burne-Jones, Wilfred Scawen Blunt and others. But its relative isolation – getting to Kelmscott usually involved a rail journey, then a pony and trap – meant that visitors were relatively few and intermittent.

After Morris's death Kelmscott became the family home, really for the first time. Jane and May involved themselves in village life and encouraged the use of the Manor for local gatherings. Guests were invited to stay, but told by May to 'be prepared for hermit-like simplicity and casualness. There is nothing to do and no amusements, and that is so nice.'

Ownership by Oxford University

May Morris clearly intended that under the terms of her will, Oxford University would install a tenant who would admit those wishing to visit her father's shrine. In practice there was only a trickle of visitors, partly because during the war travel was difficult, and then, in the post-war years, Morris's reputation was only sustained by a few devoted admirers. By 1962, when the Society took possession of the Manor, it was surrounded by nettles and brambles. 'Morris's 'Cabbage and Vine' tapestry was being used as a dog's bed' and there was 'dirt and dereliction everywhere' (Sally Sandys Renton).

The early years of ownership by the Society of Antiquaries

During the 1960s Kelmscott was open to the general public once a month,²⁸ although Dick

Dufty, who leased the property from the Society and acted as curator, welcomed those with an interest in Morris, and if he was away, told them where they could find the key to the Manor. The repairs to the house carried out in 1963 did, however, divide the house into living quarters for a tenant or member of staff, and rooms for showing to visitors. In 1987 the Society took back full control of Kelmscott and appointed a management committee and custodians which had a significant impact on the attitude to visitors. As the numbers of visitors gradually increased, so did crowding on busy days, exacerbated by the very restricted opening arrangements, which were limited to the summer months and two weekdays. Opening has been extended cautiously. In 2010 the house was open two days a week and it attracted 15,000 visitors. In 2011 the figure was 18,000. The Society has gradually extended the provisions for visitors, providing a restaurant, shop and lavatories in the adjoining barns. (see Gazetteer for details) There is a timed-ticket arrangement to reduce crowding in the house. A car park, on land leased to the Society on the northern edge of the village now enables visitors to see the church and village, before arriving at the Manor.

27 MacCarthy (1994) p.319.

28 Parry 123



Fig. 16 Manor Garden Cottage



Fig. 17 1 & 2 Memorial Cottages. Philip Webb 1902-3



Fig. 18 1 & 4 Manor Cottages. Ernest Gimson 1914



Fig. 19 Visitors taking tea in the Rick Yard, May 2011

4. Kelmscott Manor and its estate: Significance

This section identifies the significance of the components of the Kelmscott estate, taking them in the order in which they were treated in the previous section.

For the purposes of a Conservation Management Plan significance can be defined generally in relation to history, art history and archaeology. It can also be assessed more specifically in relation to identifiable communities for example the residents of Kelmscott, or the Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries.

English Heritage guidance on these questions divides significance into four categories: evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal. It also recommends grading of significance in five levels: high, medium, low, neutral and intrusive. This approach is particularly necessary in the drafting of Heritage Impact Assessments. In the interests of readability a more descriptive approach is adopted in the present document and given the level of detail it is not felt desirable at this stage to grade the significance of areas, buildings and rooms. The coherence of the estate and its importance in the lives of William Morris and his family raises even humble structures above the normal level. This factor combined with the virtual absence of unsympathetic modern structures means that the great majority of the built environment is in fact of high significance. In the rooms of the Manor it would be very difficult to state that any interior was of less than high significance. The Issues section does however indicate where significance is compromised by alterations in buildings and rooms.

When the Society comes to make proposals for change, improvement or development such plans must be developed from Heritage Impact Assessments for individual areas and rooms. These documents will incorporate a much higher level of detail than is possible here and in them the analytical framework of the English Heritage guidance will need to be applied rigorously.

4.1 The landscape

General character and significance

- The Society's property at Kelmscott is principally valued for its cultural associations, rather than for the rarity of the species found in its meadows. Over a long period plant diversity has suffered from unsympathetic management and farming practices.
- The scenery of the upper Thames valley is unspectacular and had little to offer travellers in search of the Sublime or Picturesque. However, over a long period it has appealed to artists, photographers and painters, from Turner and Girtin, to Morris and his circle.
- Not all of Morris's friends found the landscape of south Oxfordshire sympathetic. After his initial enthusiasm for Kelmscott, Rossetti complained that the countryside around the Manor was the flattest and least inspiring he had ever seen, while he described the village itself as 'the doziest dump of old grey beehives'.
- For others, such as the poet and botanist Geoffrey Grigson, Kelmscott was 'an emotional centre of England' ('William Morris or no') and an inspiration to 'everyone who feels for England as a man-made environment'.

Morris and the Kelmscott landscape

- Throughout his life Morris drew inspiration from the beauty of the landscape. What made his response unusual – and important for our own time – was his understanding of the relationship between landscape, and man's use of the land. This is most eloquently expressed in the concluding pages of *News from Nowhere*, when the heroine Ellen exclaims: 'Oh me! How I love the earth, and the seasons, and the weather, and all things that deal with it, and all that grows out of it, - as this has done,' (meaning the Manor). A few paragraphs later Morris has her say: 'The earth and the growth of it and the life of it! If I could but say or show how I love it'

- Morris understood that the care of the countryside he loved implied continuous, sympathetic use. In a lecture in Oxford in 1883 he urged his audience 'to take some pains to keep the meadows and tillage as pleasant as reasonable use will allow them to be.' He then told them that the 'loss of the instinct for beauty' was 'surely and slowly destroying the beauty of the very face of the earth.'
- The landscape of Kelmscott and its surroundings were a great stimulus to his imagination and they inspired some of his most celebrated wallpapers and printed textiles, *inter alia* Willow Bough, Strawberry Thief, Evenlode, Windrush and Kennet.
- Morris articulated in language that was both poetic and passionate many of the concerns of modern environmentalists, anticipating many of the perceptions of landscape historians such as W.G.Hoskins. His view of the countryside was holistic, as well as romantic.
- The local landscape, including the land owned by the Society has recreational value for local residents and people walking the Thames path.

4.2 Field and buried archaeology

4.2.1 Archaeology - intrinsic significance

The 12.5 acre Kelmscott estate is located on the floodplain of the Upper Thames and occupies a significant area of landscape rich in prehistoric, Romano-British and Medieval archaeology. There are no documented buried archaeological remains from within the estate boundaries; however, due to the location of the property, the archaeological potential is high. This has been examined in 'William Morris's Kelmscott: Landscape and History', 2007, particularly chapters 1 to 4. In summary the alluvial deposits adjacent to the Thames and the edges of the gravel terraces have been demonstrated to hold great potential for archaeological remains of hunter-gatherers from the late glacial to the end of the Mesolithic periods (10,000 – 4,000BC) (Archaeology under alluvium Ref). The alluvial deposits and particularly any organic remains from within palaeo-channels will potentially contain good evidence for

reconstructing past environments and landscape history (Robinson 2007)¹.

The countryside around Kelmscott is rich in cropmarks and the evidence of open fields, ancient pit clusters, house gullies, enclosures, trackways and other monuments. These features testify to the occupation of the gravel terraces of the upper Thames valley before, during and after the Roman period. These remains are most clearly visible as cropmarks, and have been discussed in detail by Baker (2007)².

The earliest phases are of the Neolithic and Bronze Age. During the Neolithic period (4000-2000BC) two major cursus monuments were constructed at Buscott Wick, 3.2km to the west of the Manor, and Lechlade, 4km north west of Kelmscott (Barclay et al³; Baker, 2007⁴, Figure 15). Each cursus also has a number of associated circular monuments of probable Neolithic to Bronze Age date. The Kelmscott area is thus likely to have formed part of a ceremonial landscape during the Neolithic, and particularly during the period c.3,600-3,300BC when the cursus monuments were constructed. From the middle of the second millennium BC, the area was progressively divided up into a network of fields, settlements and track ways, a process which continued through late prehistory and into the Romano-British periods. The evolution of this agricultural landscape in the upper and middle Thames has recently been described by Lambrick and Robinson (2008)⁵. The Kelmscott area has provided much in the way of crop mark evidence that illustrates the development of the prehistoric and Romano-British landscape (Baker 2007⁶, especially Figures 10, 11, 12 and 16). This evidence shows that beneath the buildings owned by the Society and in the surrounding meadows there is almost certainly evidence of very early agricultural activity and settlement dating to these periods.

1 Mark Robinson 'The Environmental Archaeology and Historical Ecology of Kelmscott' in Crossley, Hassall & Salway (2007)

2 Steve Baker 'A Place for Digging Ditches: Cropmarks around Kelmscott' in Crossley, Hassall & Salway (2007)

3 Barclay et al (2003)

4 Baker in Crossley, Hassall & Salway (2007)

5 Lambrick & Robinson (2008)

6 Baker in Crossley, Hassall & Salway (2007)

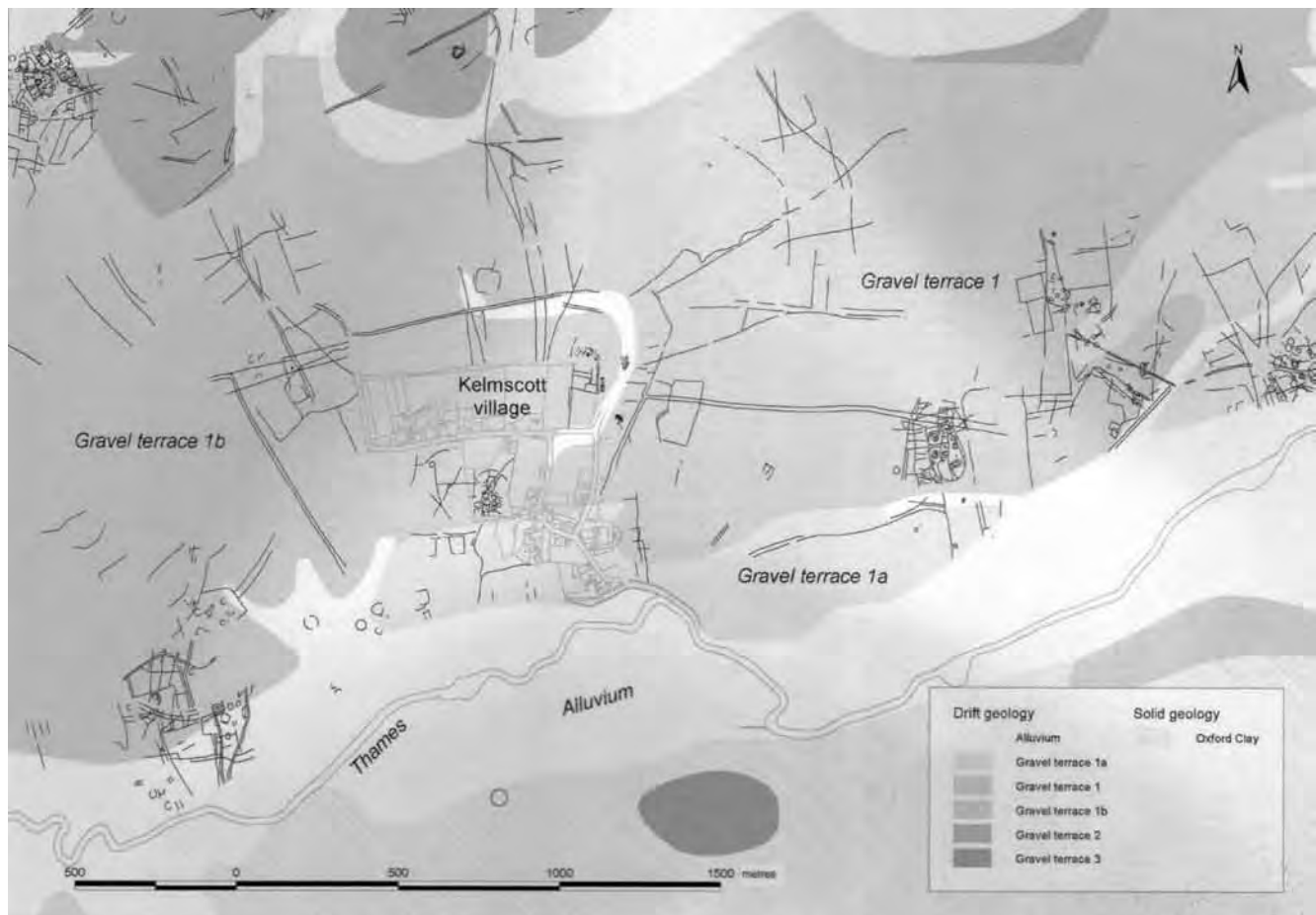
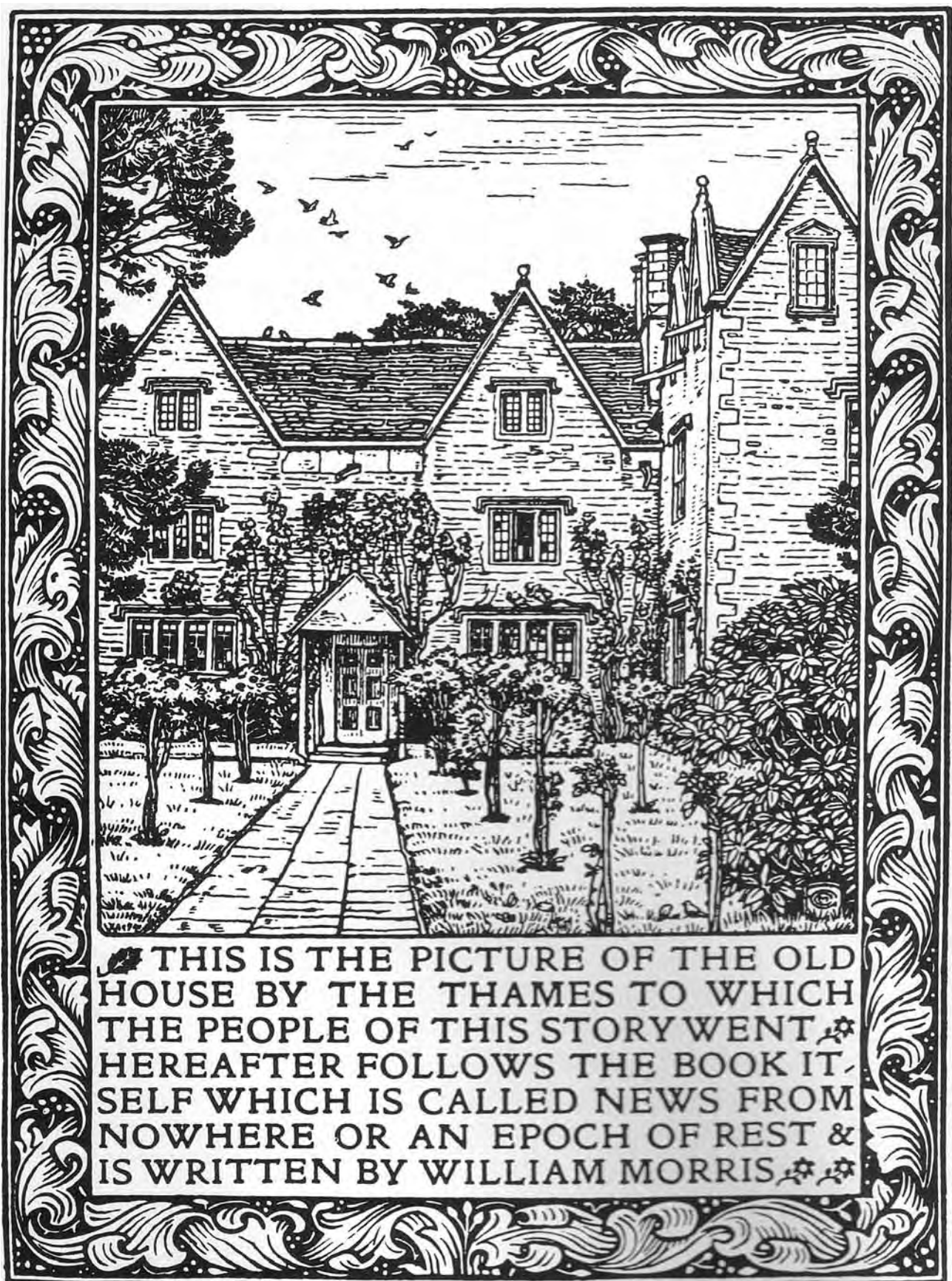


Fig. 20 Cropmarks and geology around Kelmscott parish (from Crossley, Hassall & Salway 2007)



THIS IS THE PICTURE OF THE OLD
HOUSE BY THE THAMES TO WHICH
THE PEOPLE OF THIS STORY WENT
HEREAFTER FOLLOWS THE BOOK IT-
SELF WHICH IS CALLED NEWS FROM
NOWHERE OR AN EPOCH OF REST &
IS WRITTEN BY WILLIAM MORRIS

Fig. 21 Frontispiece to *News from Nowhere* by Charles March Gere (1892)

Indeed, there are two complexes of cropmarks situated near the Kelmscott Estate which are Scheduled Monuments. Scheduled Monument 1006326 lies a few hundred metres to the north west and west of the estate and consists of a dense series of ditches and gullies which have been interpreted as enclosures and settlement dating from the early Iron Age to the Romano-British periods. Scheduled Monument 1006325 is located on the north eastern outskirts of the village, and consists of two drove ways and an enclosure, which could date to anywhere from the Neolithic to Medieval periods.

The Saxon, Medieval and post-medieval archaeology and history of Kelmscott has been described in detail by Townley (2007)⁷. Naturally, the Manor and the barns at Kelmscott are themselves artefacts of great archaeological significance, capable of illuminating the past. They are antiquities meriting archaeological analysis and conservation in an exemplary way. However, they form part of a landscape and village complex of significant historical and archaeological interest.

In conclusion, the Kelmscott Estate contains potential for buried archaeological remains of some significance from the end of the last Ice Age at 10,000BC to the post-medieval periods.

4.2.2 Archaeology and Morris

The archaeological significance of Kelmscott is examined in 'William Morris's Kelmscott: Landscape and History', 2007, particularly chapters 1 to 4.

- The intrinsic significance of the field archaeology at Kelmscott is augmented by an understanding of Morris's response to the signs of the early history of the man-made landscape.
- William Morris's sense of the past was partly intuitive and partly the result of a lifetime of

observation and study. He wrote eloquently about abandoned village sites, monastic bridle-roads, and historic breeds of cattle. He regarded his schooldays as largely wasted apart from the opportunity to explore the countryside around Marlborough which he described as 'thickly scattered with prehistoric monuments'. He went on to say that he 'set myself eagerly to studying these and everything else that had a history in it.'

- In Morris's accounts of Kelmscott there is a powerful sense of the breadth of his vision of the past. He shared with Ruskin a belief that all things 'bind and blend themselves together'. He was deeply interested in any artefact that provided clues to the life and values of the communities with which it was once associated.

4.3 The Manor in the village, past and present

- The significance of the Manor and its owners in the life of the village from the late sixteenth century onwards is well documented. It continued - with varying degrees of intensity - into the tenancy and the ownership of the Morris family.
- During her later life May Morris was the leading figure in the village and had a considerable and beneficial impact on its character, providing useful buildings for the local community that were also of great architectural distinction. In addition to the works by Gimson, Manor Cottages and the Memorial Hall, she bought a group of cottages that were threatened with demolition to provide housing for local people. She helped to found the Kelmscott Womens' Institute. She stated at the time of her decision to leave the Manor to Oxford University that she and her father had been chiefly responsible for the fact the village was virtually unspoilt (see Gazetteer - Cottages). This gives added significance to the outlying land and buildings now owned by the Society.
- The Society has not, of course, attempted to assume the social leadership element of the Manor's historic role but the sense of community involvement is an important legacy and in recent years Kelmscott's custodians have been active in village life.

⁷ Simon Townley 'Medieval and Modern Settlement at Kelmscott' in Crossley, Hassall & Salway (2007)

- Tensions between the Manor and the village in recent times have arisen chiefly from levels of public visiting. Some residents value the interaction with the visiting public. Others see it as problem.
- The Society continues to be a local employer. Its actions affect residents, especially its tenants, employees and those who live on the route between its car park and the Manor.
- The Manor has a useful functional relationship with independent commercial hospitality in the village.

4.4 The Turner family at Kelmscott Manor

The house was the home of members of the Turner family from its building until James Turner's death in 1869.

- The fabric of the house and much of the most important fixed decoration (wainscot, fireplaces etc.) relates to its ownership by the Turners.
- Inventories and other documents throw light on the way that their rooms were furnished and used.
- Much is known about these families from the early seventeenth century, and the house is the expression of their prosperity and way of life.
- The house can thus be placed clearly in the context of the social history of the village and locality.
- The farming practices of members of the family in the nineteenth century, and their contribution to important advances in cattle and sheep breeding are well documented.

4.5 The Manor as the home of William Morris

- The place which Kelmscott Manor occupies in the life and work of Morris is both central and complex. Its powerful influence is felt in his writing, in his art and in the work of his followers in the Arts and Crafts movement both in Britain and abroad.
- From the moment he first visited it in 1871

Kelmscott represented for him a concentration of much of what was wholesome and beautiful in the natural and man-made environment. On first discovering the property in 1871 he wrote to his business partner Charles Faulkner describing it as 'a heaven on earth; an old stone house like Water Eaton, and such a garden! Close down by the river, a boathouse and all things handy'. In Morris's turbulent emotional life the house and its landscape were the place where his powerful romantic feelings, both personal and cultural, could achieve some sort of resolution and peace. He writes of it in human terms as a kind of muse and companion, and also as a place of refuge.

- Morris's occupation of Kelmscott holds an important place in the rediscovery of the Cotswolds by the pioneers of the Arts and Crafts movement.
- Perhaps more significant was the effect it had on Morris's ideas about society. "At Kelmscott Morris came to see himself as living at the mystic centre of a country of immense beauty and complex interconnections... Morris's view of the countryside roamed further outwards from these grey stone villages of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire to all the variations of land and architecture that made up the texture of England as a whole. It was now [1871-5] that one of his most influential concepts, the ideal of the network of small ruralist communities began to surface. Morris wrote in those early Kelmscott years: 'but look, suppose people lived in little communities among gardens and green fields, so that you could be in the country in 5 minutes walk, and had few wants; almost no furniture for instance, and no servants, and studied (the difficult) arts of enjoying life, and finding out what they really wanted: then I think one might hope that civilization had really begun.'⁸
- These ideas were more fully developed in *News From Nowhere* (1890), which, in the Kelmscott Press edition (1892) carried Charles March Gere's frontispiece of the Manor as the mystical goal and climax of the river journey which the second half of the novel describes. The subtitle *An Epoch of Rest*, emphasizes and defines Kelmscott's recreational value for Morris.

⁸ MacCarthy (1994) p. 314-5



Fig. 22 'If I can' embroidery by William Morris hanging in the Green Room at Kelmscott.



Fig. 23 Blue serge 'Daisy' hanging by Jane Morris in the Garden Hall at Kelmscott.

- This publication consolidated Kelmscott's reputation as an ideal of the traditional English house and suggested a particularly alluring and romantic rural English version of Socialism. Within a decade some of the most important new Arts and Crafts houses embodied Kelmscott's distinctive and unpretentious characteristics.
- Building on some of the central ideas of *News From Nowhere* moreover Ebenezer Howard's *Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (1898) and *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1902) were followed by the planning of the first garden city at Letchworth by Morris's follower Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker.
- The plain interiors of Kelmscott as Morris found them represented the antithesis of the over-furnished and decorated Victorian interior. For Morris and Philip Webb they pointed the way towards a simple and functional interior that became a central theme of architectural design in modern Europe. For Morris Kelmscott completed his personal conversion from revived medievalism; this was to have profound consequences for the future of design.
- Morris's contribution to architectural conservation was to turn Ruskin's ideas into an organised movement with the foundation of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in 1877. His appreciation of the architecture of Kelmscott and the Cotswolds contributed significantly to his determination to establish SPAB.

4.6 D.G. Rossetti at Kelmscott

- Rossetti's response to Kelmscott Manor was initially very similar to that of Morris.
- Kelmscott inspired some of Rossetti's poetry and details of both house and landscape appear in his paintings.
- The Tapestry Room was the artist's studio in the years of his residence and thus has considerable importance in the history of Pre-Raphaelite art.
- The objects of Rossetti's that remain are the only surviving collection of his advanced and highly influential and eclectic taste as a decorator.

4.7 Kelmscott as the home of Jane Morris

- Jane was an embroiderer of importance whose most famous work, the blue serge daisy hanging, was designed for Red House and also used for the backdrop to Morris Marshall Falkner and Co.'s display of furniture and stained glass at the 1862 International Exhibition.
- Hers is one of the most famous and distinctive faces in the history of art, especially as the subject of numerous portraits by D.G. Rossetti of which The Blue Silk Dress at Kelmscott is one of the most important.
- Jane's role as the chatelaine of Kelmscott is not well documented but we do know that she took an interest in its furnishing. Jan Marsh writes 'It is less often remarked that the 'Morris style' of simple living was practised by the women, and owed a great deal to Jane's preference for a plain and simple lifestyle.'⁹
- Although the difficulties of the Morris marriage have obscured the degree of concord that may have existed between husband and wife on matters of housekeeping, the relationship with Rossetti is a complicating factor. Against the view of Jane's supposed rustic simplicity of taste is evidence of her role in the acquisition of some of Rossetti's more exotic furniture. It is possible that Jane was the principal means by which quantities of Rossetti's furniture eventually came back to Kelmscott. (On 8th April 1882, Rossetti, then on his deathbed, asked Hall Cane to make certain that Jane 'had anything of his that she cared for.') Objects now at Kelmscott can be identified in watercolours of Rossetti's rooms at Cheyne Walk painted by Henry Treffry Dunn in 1882. They show, for example, the Chinese red lacquer chairs now in the North Hall, a corner cupboard now in the Panelled Room, mirrors similar to the convex mirror on the stairs, and brass chargers similar to those now in the Green Room).
- Jane lived on at Kelmscott for eighteen years after the death of Morris, a significant period of tenure (but see below 4.8).

9 Marsh (1986) p.145

- Her desire to commemorate her husband by converting some farm buildings in Kelmscott for use as a club was a loyal perpetuation of his ideas on rural community life and its possibilities. (When her plan was frustrated by the reluctance of Mr Hobbs it was replaced by social housing in the form of the Memorial Cottages).
-

4.8 May Morris and her ownership of Kelmscott.

- May Morris is a key figure in the history of Kelmscott Manor. She lived there longer than any other member of her family, and took great pains to secure the future of the house and its estate with the idea that it should become a memorial to her father.
 - May considerably reorganised the contents during her residency after 1912. Some important objects and pictures did not enter (or re-enter) Kelmscott until the sale of her house No 8 Hammersmith Terrace in 1923.
 - May worked closely with her father and developed an independent career as an embroiderer and silversmith. She was put in charge of all the Morris and Co. embroidery work in 1885 at the age of 23. She wrote on the principles of embroidery design and technique, on Coptic Textiles and *Opus Anglicanum*, was Adviser on Embroidery to the Central School of Arts and Crafts and was the moving force behind the Womens' Guild of Arts and Crafts whose first Honorary Secretary she became in 1907. She gave lectures in America and exhibited in Paris and Ghent on the eve of the First World War.
 - She was the editor of the first publication of her father's collected works.
 - She was politically active and was a founder signatory of the Socialist League Manifesto in 1885.
-

4.9 Kelmscott's ownership by the University of Oxford.

- The University owned Kelmscott Manor for nearly a quarter of a century but the significance of this epoch, except as a transitional stage to its

ownership by the Society of Antiquaries, is now difficult to assess. The episode was characteristic of a period that saw a search for new (often partly or wholly institutional) roles for historic houses and the emergence of new strategies for their preservation. The University played its part in this movement until the model devised for Kelmscott became unworkable. It is also fair to say that its tenure was a period in which the property slipped into some disorder and decay.

4.10 Kelmscott's ownership by the Society of Antiquaries.

- Morris was one the most distinguished Fellows in the history of the Society of Antiquaries so the Society's role as residuary legatee of the will of May Morris was fitting. For Antiquaries and for the public Morris is a striking embodiment of the application of antiquarian knowledge to the development of new ways of living and progress in contemporary design. He shows how the preoccupations of the Society and its Fellows can contribute to the making of today's world and to the enrichment of people's lives.
- The response of the Secretary and President at the time of the enforced acquisition of Kelmscott Manor represents an heroic epoch in the history of the Society when the will to do the right thing - in the face of grave difficulties - was rewarded by the means in the form of the Minet Gift.
- The Society's actions saved the Manor from dereliction and loss and in this played a decisive role in the protection of a key part of our cultural heritage. It has continued to present the Manor in an exemplary way and has undertaken other important works of preservation and responsible restoration of which the most notable has been the recreation of the beautiful and now much-loved garden with a grant from the Carnegie Trust in 1995.¹⁰
- Kelmscott Manor is bound into the strategic objectives of the Society and whereas the library and collections at Burlington house are made

¹⁰ For further information on the Society's acquisition and management of Kelmscott see Parry (1996)

freely available to those outside the Fellowship with a legitimate interest, it is only the Manor that is fully open to the public. Kelmscott is in this way indispensable to the status of the Society's collections as an Accredited Museum and all that implies in terms of status and the availability of grant-aid.

- Kelmscott is the Society's principal point of contact with the general public (18,000 visitors in 2011 was a peak in recent years).
- Given the Society's extensive and learned membership it is particularly well placed to focus resources of expert knowledge and experience in the management of historic properties on the challenges and opportunities presented by Kelmscott Manor.
- Kelmscott has functioned as a useful focus for research. *William Morris Art and Kelmscott* (ed. Linda Parry) was published in 1996 to celebrate the centenary of Morris's death. In the same year the Society set up the Kelmscott Landscape Project to investigate the village's archaeology history and ecology which led to the publication in 2007 of *William Morris's Kelmscott: Landscape and History*.
- The Society has published a series of handsome and informative guidebooks to the property.
- Experience gained in running this historic property lends weight and wisdom to the Society's engagement in public debates about heritage matters, showing that it can combine the highest standards of scholarship with practical knowledge of conservation issues.
- Administered by the Society of Antiquaries and running independently alongside the ownership of Kelmscott is the William and Jane Morris Fund, established by the will of May Morris in 1939 for the repair of historic place of worship. This perpetuation of Morris's campaigning work through the Society indicates how its association with Morris and Kelmscott has the potential to extend the Society's work and influence.

4.11 The fabric of the Manor house

- Kelmscott Manor is an outstanding example of a small gentry house of the seventeenth century.
- In the conservative ownership of Morris and his heirs it underwent few significant alterations. Its

relatively unmodified character is rare in Oxfordshire and the Cotswolds since the colonization of the area by prosperous professional and business people.

- Through the life and writing of William Morris it exerted a powerful influence on the built environment both nationally and internationally. (See above: The Significance of Kelmscott as the home of William Morris.)

4.12 The contents of Kelmscott Manor

Although the contents of Kelmscott are there because of their associations with William Morris, their history as a collection is extended, complex and involves contradictions. The way the house is shown today is the result of trying to reconcile those contradictions. The different stages are:

Kelmscott as discovered by Morris in 1871

For Morris, Kelmscott represented the values and aspirations of 'simple country-folk of the long-past times'. He loved its faded tapestries and its sparseness. It was an escape from bourgeois clutter, from the materialism he despised.

Kelmscott as lived in by Morris, his family and Rossetti

To make the house habitable, Morris introduced a little of his own furniture. The photographs of 1896 by Frederick Evans show a few Sussex chairs and the 'If I can' embroidery that now hangs in the Green Room. The printed wall hangings of the Green Room and the Old Hall were also present in Morris's time. The rather hostile account of Maud Sambournes's visit confirms the sparseness of the furnishings in the last year of Morris's life (see *Gazetteer Old Hall*) Morris's co-tenant, Rossetti, brought furniture and pictures, reflecting a taste that was more 'eclectic, careless and recherche' than Morris's¹¹. His intentions seem to have been

11 MacCarthy (1994) p.219



Fig. 24 The bay in the Tapestry Room opened up in 1964-8



Fig. 25 Fafnir topiary in the east garden



Fig. 26 The Mulberry Garden

very different from those of Morris and may have involved creating a rich assembly of objects of the sort used to furnish a Chelsea studio.

The Kelmscott of Jane and May Morris, and Mary Lobb

Between the death of William Morris in 1896 and the death of May Morris in 1938 further contents were added, most significantly the furnishings of the family's houses in Hammersmith in 1897 and 1923. These included many items that had been designed for Red House. When May Morris wrote in 1926 that 'the furniture etc. is arranged and the house remains exactly as it was in my father's time', her memory was selective. These additions, however, greatly enriched Kelmscott as a document for the study of Morris and his circle. It is clear from the will and memorandum of May Morris (10th July 1929) that the contents of the Manor were associated in her mind with the different phases of her father's life, so the house's for which they were designed or acquired are in several cases noted. A further account of provenance is provided in A. Stoppani *William Morris and Kelmscott* Design Council (1981).

A few items were specified bequests to relatives and friends. May left the bulk of his significant objects to Oxford University for display. The residue of the domestic contents was left to Mary Lobb whose executors sold them in a two-day sale in 1939. As well as china, linen etc. the sale included a significant number of works of art and textiles.¹²

Acquisitions made by the Society of Antiquaries after 1962, because of their associations with Morris and Kelmscott

If some of the everyday contents of the Manor were dispersed in the sale of 1939 others may have been displaced by the possessions of the tenants occupying Kelmscott under the terms of the

¹² *Sale of a Large Portion of the Furnishings and Effects removed from Kelmscott Manor, the Home of William Morris* Wednesday and Thursday July 19th and 20th 1939. Auctioneers, Hobbs and Chambers, Faringdon, Berks.

bequest to Oxford University. When the Society decided to open the Manor regularly to visitors, there was an assumption that items associated with Morris would be acquired, to enhance its interest. The practice has continued and is now controlled by an acquisitions policy drafted to protect the integrity of the indigenous contents as a collection.

Items lost from the property since 1962

Contents removed by the Society include the Sheraton dining table, a sofa of the same period from the Panelled Room, and a half tester bed – all Morris family items named in May's memorandum.

- It is clear that the contents which the Society inherited with the house were all of great significance, including those which have been lost.
- Chattels acquired that are merely related in some way to Morris and his work but which have no direct historical relationship with the house can be regarded as of secondary importance for Kelmscott.

4.13 The interiors of the Manor

The interiors of Kelmscott are both artefacts in an archaeological sense; and also expressions of the historical, social, artistic, decorative, literary and political ideas for which Morris is celebrated. Exactly what they represented for Morris is vividly recorded in his writings, principally in *News from Nowhere* (1890) and in his letters.

Their significance for May Morris is recorded in the Memorandum attached to her Will and in surviving letters.

The interiors as discovered by Morris

The appearance of the house encountered by Morris had great personal significance for him, in ways that influenced his ideas on art and society. He valued it as an uncorrupted expression of the passage of time; for its 'air of romance'; and as evidence of the way

of life of yeomen farmers who gave its interiors their 'rough country fashion'.

The relative emptiness and plainness of the Kelmscott interiors as Morris first found them powerfully affected his thinking and that of his circle helping ultimately to cleanse English and European domestic interiors of clutter in favour of elegant simplicity. They have an important relationship with his close friend Philip Webb's pursuit of a distinctive and understated architectural manner in which period detail was used with modesty and great subtlety.

The interiors as lived in by Morris, Rossetti and the Morris family

When Morris introduced his own furnishings it was for purely functional reasons; to make the house habitable for his family. This policy complemented the essential character of the house as he saw it, rather than changing it into a reflection of his own personality. This practical austerity must have reinforced Morris's developing view that it was possible to care for a historic building without making a grand personal statement about his own learning and technical skill. At the time most architects working on historic buildings saw it as their role to improve and reinterpret what they found. Morris on the other hand valued the building for what it was, not as a vehicle for the expression of his personal tastes. Morris's response to Kelmscott was revolutionary in its restraint.

His respect for Kelmscott's relative austerity and sparseness seems to have been reinforced by his trip to Iceland shortly after he took over the lease. He admired unadorned interiors, whatever his firm might supply to its wealthy clients. This is most evident in the Panelled Room, the Green Room and, in its original state, the Old Hall. He made few concessions to his own family's comfort, or that of his guests, and resisted adding passages, bathrooms and other conveniences.

During Morris's lifetime wallpapers were introduced, most significantly in William and Jane's bedrooms. The interiors were also later transformed by the hanging of tapestries and textiles, and by

May Morris's embroideries. In most sixteenth and seventeenth-century gentry houses it is the loss of textiles, so vulnerable to damage by light and moth, that has changed the character of their interiors most profoundly. At Kelmscott the survival of seventeenth-century tapestries and the profusion of Morris family textiles now gives a richness to the interiors that is rare and precious. There is also a coherence to the cumulative effect which derives from Morris's research into historic dying techniques, in particular the use of vegetable dyes.

In his writing on historic buildings, Morris referred to 'solemnity of tone' and to materials that were 'always beautiful, but from the first meant to grow more beautiful by the lapse of time.'¹³ The interpretation and application of this idea at the Manor is an element of its responsible conservation. For Morris 'the thing most to be longed for' was 'A beautiful house.'¹⁴

The influx of the furnishings after Morris's death from Kelmscott House, Upper Mall, Hammersmith significantly moderated the country austerity that he had found so pleasing.

Oxford University's internal alterations

May Morris's injunction in her will that Kelmscott should be preserved as her father knew it, with 'no modern innovations, improvements or installations' was set aside by Oxford University, in the interests of attracting sympathetic tenants. Electric light was installed and a late medieval screen moved from the Garden Hall. The Green Room – so-called because of the colour mixed with great care by Morris himself – was scraped and repainted and its partition wall removed. Windows that had been filled in for centuries were unblocked. These and other alterations now seem regrettable. Nevertheless, the period of ownership by the University saw the survival of most of what was significant in Kelmscott's interiors.

13 Fiona MacCarthy (1994) p.415.

14 Fiona MacCarthy (1994) p.267.

The presentation of the interiors by the Society of Antiquaries

The repairs undertaken by the Society are an important demonstration of conservation principles, reflecting, although not always strictly obeying, the tenets of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and its own conservation philosophy as they are interpreted today. The alterations to interiors that were undertaken as part of this repair programme are however of secondary significance in the history of the Manor.

In the restoration of 1964-8 a number of changes were made to the interiors as they were found. In the Old Hall, where stone paving was substituted for Philip Webb's parquet, the removal of his fireplace and overmantel to reveal the seventeenth century fireplace together with the introduction of built-in corner display cabinet compounded the transformation of the room as Morris knew it. The removal of the partition between the Tapestry Room and its closet and the consequent re-arrangement of the tapestries was another significant change. In the Garden Hall and first floor landing, the unblocking of windows altered the character of the spaces and the fall of light, as did the re-introduction of a faux screens passage using a partition that had in Morris's time enclosed a substantial internal cupboard.

Many of the contents were moved from the places which they had occupied in May Morris's memorandum. In the Panelled Room, notably, this evidently created a more conventional and less meaningful arrangement than the one recorded by May.

The original decoration of Jane Morris's bedroom was completely changed in favour of a Willow Boughs themed interior based around a painting of Jane, moved from the Panelled Room.

Although these changes created lovely rooms their combined significance is as a record of enlightened 1960's taste and cannot compare with the significance of Morris family arrangements that they replaced.¹⁵

15 For changes to the house subsequent to the occupation of the Morris

4.14 The Manor gardens

For William Morris the garden at Kelmscott was as beautiful and inspiring as the Manor itself. This is evident in his description of it in *News from Nowhere*:

'The garden between the wall and the house was redolent of the June flowers, and the roses were rolling over one another with that delicious super-abundance of small well-tended gardens which at first sight takes all thought from the beholder save that of beauty'

In his appreciation of gardens Morris was as fiercely independent in his views as he was in most things, and he particularly deplored what he called the 'nightmare of 'horticulture''. He regarded the garden not just as intimately related to the Manor, but as part of a single, composite work of art.

The Manor, its planting, and the surrounding trees and wild flowers provided Morris with ideas for many of his designs. However, as Moggridge¹⁶ and Derek Baker¹⁷ have shown, his designs rarely derived from drawings of the flowers and foliage at Kelmscott, although they were no doubt inspired by them. Instead he tended to devise repeating patterns learnt from historic textile designs and from the illustrations in Gerard's and other herbals.

The birds of the garden would have been very significant for Morris who found their presence, sound and habits endlessly inspiring. They feature in many of his designs (notably the Strawberry Thief chintz and the Bird woven wool fabric).

The restoration of the garden in 1994 does not attempt to replicate exactly the garden Morris knew, because that would be impracticable. Instead it uses the historical evidence to evoke the garden as Morris found it and which he cherished. He would have known that the proper care of a garden calls for constant renewal.

family see Jonathan Howard 'Kelmscott Manor as William Morris never knew it' in Crossley, Hassall and Salway (2007) p. 131-145.

16 op. cit.

17 *Flowers of William Morris* (1996)

The garden is much valued by visitors and provides a setting for the house that is comparable to the original garden of Morris's time.

Garden buildings and walls

These are integral to the history of the garden and the Manor, its visual quality and architectural and historic interest.

4.15 The agricultural buildings

- The farm buildings are essential to the interest of the Manor; their construction and materials correspond to the various phases of the development of the house.
 - They symbolise the economic wealth on which it was built.
 - They are in some cases important examples of unaltered historic farm buildings.
 - In addition to their intrinsic worth they are crucially important to the setting of the Manor and were much loved by Morris.
 - Some of them have proved vital to the management of visitors during the ownership of the Society.
-

4.16 The cottages

- The cottages are significant examples of the patronage of the Morris family.
- They are memorials.
- They are exceptionally important late examples of the architecture of Philip Webb and Ernest Gimson.
- They contribute significantly to the charm and historic interest of the village and therefore contribute directly to the experience of a visit to Kelmscott.
- The land that they occupy preserves and controls the approach to the Manor and constitutes part of its wider setting.
- Occupation of these cottages by village residents contributes to the sustainability of the village community.

4.17 Visitor access to Kelmscott

- In the 1870s, when Morris was preoccupied with forming the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, he wrote that 'the newly invented study of living history is the chief joy of so many of our lives'.¹⁸
- For Morris Kelmscott exemplified the way the evidence of the past could enrich the lives of guests and visitors. Buildings and their contents offered a way of looking at the world that could have profound spiritual, intellectual and moral significance.
- The gift of Kelmscott to the Society has given it the opportunity to share these opportunities responsibly with a large visiting public. Their experience can be thought-provoking and enlightening, as well as being straightforwardly enjoyable.
- The small numbers of visitors in the period before the ownership of the Society never constituted any kind of threat to its peace and tranquility.

18 Fiona MacCarthy (1994) p55.

5. Issues affecting the Manor and its estate

Having in the previous two sections established understanding and significance this section follows the same framework in addressing the issues that present themselves under these headings.

5.1 Landscape preservation and use

- The Society's ownership of the Kelmscott estate has contributed to the preservation of the village in subtle but important ways. The cottage gardens, paddocks and small parcels of land are still essentially as Morris knew them. They have not been gentrified or suburbanised by the addition of large garages, conifers, swimming pools and conservatories. This discreet stewardship has been of great benefit to Kelmscott. But the unchanged character of the village and its landscape setting remains vulnerable.
- Some of the threats to Kelmscott will come from proposals for development that could obviously and dramatically change its character. The Society will need to be vigilant over insidious change, for instance from proposals for road widening, the introduction of solar panels on local buildings and from wind turbines in the vicinity.
- The loss of elms from disease since the late 1960s has changed the scale and shape of the landscape that Morris knew.
- The river, always a vital element in the life of Kelmscott, is as significant today as it was for Morris. Arrival by boat can still be a rewarding experience. In recent years individuals have attempted to moor boats over long periods. This has been successfully resisted recently.
- Much of the flora that Morris admired at Kelmscott has been impoverished. The diversity of the plant species and wildlife has been reduced through inappropriate management of meadows and other areas on the Society's estate.
- As William and May Morris recorded, Kelmscott can be particularly beautiful at night. There is no street lighting in the village. Light pollution is a constant threat.

5.2 Archaeology

- The archaeology of the property owned by the Society, except for its buildings, is undesignated and by definition unknown but the rich significance of the field archaeology in the area is well understood.
 - The Society has no direct control over the agricultural activities in the countryside surrounding its property. The area is rich in archaeological significance.
 - The protection of Kelmscott's archaeology depends on studying and understanding the physical evidence, including the landscape and buildings for which the Society is responsible; and on conveying that knowledge to those who can influence its future protection.
-

5.3 The relationship with the village

- The Society as a remote landlord will face challenges in relating effectively to village residents.
- The public visiting of the Manor causes irritation to some of them.
- The Society's role and its aims for Kelmscott will tend to be imperfectly understood and may not always be supported.
- Judging the right balance between accommodating the needs of residents and protecting the vital long-term interests of Kelmscott Manor is not easy.
- There is much scope for constructive involvement with the village.

5.4 Early owners

- Research on Kelmscott's early owners is in an outline state at the moment.
 - The cultural significance of Morris and his family tends to obscure the local importance of the early owners whose tenure was longer and whose impact on the shaping of the local economy, society and landscape was profound.
-

5.5 William Morris's occupation of the Manor

- Identifying what Morris valued in Kelmscott is crucial to its future preservation and presentation. But preserving those qualities, may conflict with current perceptions, with access by visitors and with commercial and other activities intended to support the long-term preservation of the property.
 - There were minor alterations to the building in the years following Morris's death.
 - Substantial changes and additions made in the contents and their arrangement by his family following his death may be seen to conflict with Morris's early vision and yet they have their own historical integrity.
 - Later alterations by Oxford University and the Society have significantly changed the house as it was in the Morris family's occupation (see below).
-

5.6 Dante Gabriel Rossetti's occupation of the Manor

- Rossetti's contribution at Kelmscott is not fully understood. He spent far more time in the property during the early years than Morris and will initially have played a more active part in its arrangement decoration and use.

5.7 Jane Morris and Kelmscott

- Jane's role and life at Kelmscott is a subject of considerable interest but is inadequately documented. She remains an enigmatic figure but may have been decisive in many aspects of the arrangement and decoration of the house both during her husband's lifetime and afterwards.
-

5.8 May Morris and Kelmscott

- May's occupation of the Manor is the last period of private ownership but her domestic arrangements have been altered both by the contents sale of 1939, by Oxford University and by the Society.
-

5.9 Ownership by Oxford University

- Too little is known about the history of the house during ownership by the University and of the life led here by its tenants.
-

5.10 Ownership by the Society of Antiquaries

- The practical relationship between the ownership of the Kelmscott estate and the core purposes of the Society is capable of further constructive development.
- The importance of Kelmscott to the Society may not be fully understood or appreciated by all the Fellowship. Support from the Fellowship is important to the property's future.
- Kelmscott Manor and its contents justify, indeed require curatorial expertise at the property.
- Continuity of knowledge is an important issue in relation to the long-term care of historic properties and their contents. It may be vulnerable to management changes and cycles of committee membership.
- The Kelmscott Committee is not a management body but the business conducted in its calendared meetings may not be sufficient to develop detailed strategy.

- Recent annual deficits have been a matter of concern. The need to raise estate income could put pressure on the care of historic assets through income-generating uses and conversions that are in conflict with the Society's conservation obligations.

5.11 The Fabric of the Manor House

- Repairs will soon be needed to the upper parts of the late-seventeenth-century north wing to stabilize parapets, copings, finials and chimneys. These were recommended in the quinquennial inspection of 2007 and although the building has not deteriorated significantly since then the time for a repair campaign is rapidly approaching.
- The electrical services show signs of age. Over-heating of fittings in the attic has been noticed. (see 2nd Floor – Attics in Gazetteer)
- Interior and exterior details of the Manor House were altered by Oxford University and, in 1965-8, by the Society. This included the unblocking of windows, the replacement of joinery, the revealing of historic features that were not visible during the tenure of Morris and his descendants, and the removal of historic partitions to enlarge rooms. In the case of the north elevation it involved the building by the Society of a gabled stone porch to form the principal access for visitors.
- Restoration of features to their state in the time of the Morris family, on the other hand, could conceal important features integral to the seventeenth-century house.
- Creation of the custodian's domestic accommodation involved the removal of most of the painted historic softwood joinery in part of the house and its replacement with contemporary oak details and also the removal of historic wall finishes and textures.
- Staff have now moved out of these rooms providing an opportunity to reclaim them, a process already begun in the Old Kitchen.

5.12 The Contents of the Manor

Conservation

- Because of the proximity of the river the contents of the ground floor of the Manor are at risk from occasional floods. Such events can also have a wider effect on the overall conservation environment.
- It has proved difficult to maintain an adequate conservation regime with the existing heating systems.
- Control of light by blinds has recently been improved but denies visitors the views out that Morris valued.
- The control of light levels is critical at a property with so many important textiles and depends on the adoption of strict regimes by staff and volunteers and constant awareness of changing conditions.
- Damage by insects is a constant threat in a property so rich in textiles.

Collections and displays

- At four of the houses most obviously associated with Morris – Standen, Wightwick Red House and Kelmscott – items have been added to their indigenous collections. The results have been that the interest of the property has been enhanced for visitors; but at the same time a misleading impression can be given. This subtle transformation, if it is allowed to continue, can amount to increasing falsification. The acquisitions policy now in place is an important check on this process.
- At Kelmscott it would be possible to adopt a more rigorous policy of presentation based on the list of furniture and effects attached to May Morris's memorandum of 1926, the inventory taken on the death of Mary Lobb in 1939 and the evidence of early photographs and drawings.
- This would involve a significant re-arrangement of the contents which have since the 1960s, been concentrated in the rooms which the Society decided to show to the public.
- Displacement of some of these contents, both pictures and furniture, would impact on ideas for the use of the rooms vacated by the custodians

where many of these contents were accommodated in May Morris's time.

- It would however allow the main rooms to regain something of their former character. (May writes about the simple schemes favoured by her father which did not allow 'the wall surfaces to be broken' and had 'no litter of any sort').
- Floor coverings present a particular problem. Morris loved faded Persian carpets, which he ruled 'were not made to be trodden on with hobnailed boots'.¹ Such carpets are evident in photographs of Kelmscott but have gradually been removed as wear made them unsafe. Many of these carpets were worn out in May Morris's time (notes on condition are in the inventory of 1939). The loss of these floor coverings has significantly changed the character of some rooms.

5.13 The interiors of the Manor House

Several rooms have been substantially altered by Oxford University and by the Society by the removal of joinery and partitions. This needs to be addressed as in their present condition they misrepresent the interiors that Morris knew or helped to create.

The survival of so much of the house that Morris loved is however of great credit to the Society. Its continuing conservation calls for exceptional sensitivity, and it is this that gives the Society the opportunity to present it as a living exemplar of what Morris's philosophy of conservation means in practice.

Decorating decisions can involve a subtle transformation of the character of interiors. There has been very little historic paint research at the property. Such research could have a decisive influence on future decisions.

Historic papers have been lost from some rooms. Evidence is relatively scanty but systematic research could be profitable.

¹ MacCarthy, p95.

5.14 The Manor gardens

The present policy for the garden – essentially, continuing the plans agreed in 1994 – is practical and beneficial. The approach would have to be reconsidered if:

- Visitor numbers increase to a point which causes unacceptable wear and tear, damage to lawns and hedges, and the loss of that sense of tranquillity which Morris so valued at Kelmscott.
- Standards of gardening and upkeep could not be maintained by the gardening staff, supported with voluntary help.
- Flooding or rising river levels began to damage planting, especially trees.
- Disease affected the garden.
- At the moment however the exemplary presentation and maintenance of the garden present no issues of significance apart from the fact that the parking of cars belonging to volunteers and disabled visitors somewhat compromises the immediate setting of the garden during visiting hours.
- All this having been said there is scope for a full researched history of the garden and its development. The case for the reinstatement of lost features can only be made once that is complete.

For example the Kelmscott enclosure map of 1798 (Crossley et al p.52) records an avenue running east to west, aligned with the north elevation of the house. (There was also a canal, running north to south, connecting with the river and ending at the avenue). An Evans photograph of 1896/7 confirms the existence of a surviving section of the avenue in Morris's time and suggests that it was of elm. A pair of elm trees from this avenue is shown E.H.New's bird's eye view of c.1890. This survival of what was perhaps an early eighteenth or late seventeenth-century formal landscape was presumably lost to disease in the late 1960s.

Garden walls

- Some repointing is required (see Quinquennial for details)
- The section of the early timber paling from the fence on the western garden wall (shown in the earliest photographs of the Manor) in storage could be used as a model for a more authentic alternative to the iron railing.

5.15 The farm buildings

Refer to Gazetteer for detail.

- Several buildings require repairs. In one case (the Paddock Barn) this is urgent.
- Capital repairs on these buildings cannot be funded from estate resources or income at their current level.
- One of the principal buildings (the south-west barn) is now in use as a tearoom and lavatories. Further work is necessary to make it operate effectively. The current arrangements obscure some of its interesting features to the extent that it is not shown to its best advantage.
- The more authentic state of preservation of certain other buildings, notably the South Road Barn and the Manor Road Barn constrains but does not prevent their adaptation to new uses.

5.16 The Cottages

- There have been problems in balancing letting income and repair bills.
- The two pairs of memorial cottages have been identified as embodying core values of the estate and are not therefore eligible for alienation.
- Attempts to involve third parties in running and letting them have not been successful.

5.17 Other estate buildings

Boundary walls in outlying fields are in some cases in poor condition.

5.18 Visitor access and management

The principal issue facing the Society and other stakeholders is whether to try to keep visitor numbers at around their present level; attempt to reduce them; aim to increase them gradually; or

take steps to increase them rapidly and substantially. There would be benefits resulting from each of these options, but also disadvantages. In attempting to weigh up these choices, the following are some of the key issues:

Impact of visitors on the conservation of the Manor and related buildings

Without careful conservation management, visitors bring wear and tear, dust and dirt, light damage and other threats to the fabric and contents of the Manor. It is, however, more damaging to have few visitors and inadequate conservation, than it is to increase visitor numbers, but with carefully monitored preventive conservation. To fund conservation cleaning and other protection, income from visitors is essential.

Visitor numbers and hours of opening

The present level of visiting is dictated by the hours of opening. These are more restricted than at most properties run by English Heritage, National Trust or historic houses opened by private owners. There would be financial benefits in extending the hours of opening, as well as public benefit, but there are also constraints, noted below. At peak times there is crowding in some rooms, which the timed ticket system can never entirely eliminate. Extending the opening hours would help to spread the load. The segregated arrangements for groups and individual visitors might usefully be reviewed.

Visitor reception

The present arrangements have evolved and work adequately most of the time. There is the potential to make better use of the Manor Road Barn (adjoining Garden Cottage and described in the listing description as the 'North Road Barn'), and the South Road Barn. The present ticket hut and associated temporary structures are not suitable for staff in the colder months and unworthy of the Manor.

The farmyard, which is the introduction to the property for the visitor, has a poor surface and is a car parking area. In wet weather it is hazardous.

The visitor experience

The opportunity to reinstate May Morris's arrangements in the house would be of interest to visitors. They and the volunteers can contribute to, and share in, the process of rediscovery.

Ancillary attractions

The provision of the intended exhibition rooms in the Manor will enhance the visitor experience but does not meet the needs of timed ticket holders awaiting their turn to enter the building. This suggests that the need for some exhibition/waiting space could usefully inform plans for the future of the farm buildings.

The interest of a visit can be greatly increased if visitors are encouraged to enjoy related attractions and sites. These include:

Buildings in Kelmscott village, including the church, the farms, cottages and the Memorial Hall.

Buildings in the vicinity, including the churches and vernacular buildings Morris particularly admired e.g. Inglesham Church and the barn at Great Coxwell. Immediately at hand is Buscot Park (National Trust) with its paintings by Rossetti, Ford Maddox Brown and Burne-Jones. In the Cotswolds, The Court Barn museum at Chipping Camden and the Arts and Crafts collections at the Cheltenham Museum and Art Gallery are directly relevant and more widely there are of course Red House and the William Morris Gallery at Walthamstow.

Volunteers

Any changes in the way the Manor is shown will only work if the knowledgeable and dedicated volunteers support them. They are a vital resource, to be consulted and nurtured. It has been difficult to provide enough volunteers to supervise all the rooms in the Manor.

This can threaten the safety of the collections. At times in the current season this has led to the temporary closure of the first floor exhibition room, impairing the visitor experience.

Car parking

The present arrangements have the great benefit of keeping most cars out of the village. Some elderly visitors find the walk from the car park arduous.

The walk from the car park gives visitors the chance to see the village, with a succession of buildings, stone field boundaries and views which illuminate the work of William Morris, as well as being significant in their own right.

Coaches, on the other hand, drop off passengers at the Manor, which has practical benefits, but also deprives them of an early opportunity to see Kelmscott in its context.

The car park does not belong to the Kelmscott estate but is the subject of a licence from the Church Commissioners and their tenant. This is an area of vulnerability for the future.

There is no shelter for staff working in the car park or for use as an initial point of contact and leaflet distribution.

Catering and the shop

It is difficult to make the shop and restaurant financially profitable with such restricted opening. On days when the Manor is open, both are at times over-crowded, and this damages sales and the visitor experience. The restaurant in particular can no longer accommodate the large numbers of visitors at peak times. Designed for 40 it seats 30 comfortably. Individual coach tours have a maximum of 55. It is uncomfortable in the colder months.

Sewage disposal

Because the site is low-lying and close to the river and not on mains drainage, sewage disposal will always be a vital consideration. The present system is already close to capacity at times.

6. Policies

Policies affecting areas and aspects of the Kelmscott Estate are set out in the order and framework adopted in the previous sections on Understanding and Significance.

6.1 Landscape preservation and protection of ecology

The estate belonging to the SAL should be seen as an entity, in which the sum is greater than the parts. The care of the landscape should provide a model of integrated management, for the reasons Morris articulated so forcefully. In practice this implies:

1. The character of the village, with its cottage gardens, small paddocks and modest entrances, will continue to be protected. Continuing ownership of some of the land and buildings provides significant protection for the village in general and the wider setting of the Manor.
2. The impoverishment of the meadows around the SAL's buildings will be slowed and reversed, by reviewing the grazing and mowing regimes; exploring alternatives to car parking on what were in Morris's time botanically rich grasslands; and resisting the use of herbicides and pesticides.
3. Bat surveys will be carried out throughout the estate, and should be consulted when repairs to buildings are necessary.
4. Wildlife surveys of the river banks will be undertaken, to reduce the risk of harm to otters and water voles, particularly when tree felling and other potentially disruptive work is being planned.
5. The tree surveys already completed should be consulted before work is carried out. The planting of trees will be restricted to replacement of the existing, long-established species, e.g. Black Poplar.
6. Consideration will however be given to a replacement species for the elms, such as the small-leaved lime which has a similar growth habit.

7. The unspoilt character of the river bank and its meadow will be protected. The land bordering the river is also crucial to the setting of Kelmscott and will be protected from adverse developments that might compromise the experience of approaching the estate from the water (as in Morris's *News from Nowhere* p.217 ff.)
8. Development on adjoining land will be resisted if it would impact on the village of Kelmscott, as happened when the Air Ministry proposed siting a radio beacon for the benefit of Fairford aerodrome, in the paddock west of the Manor.
9. Land and buildings in the village are owned by the National Trust. The Society should maintain good local and national links with the Trust to ensure the protection and enhancement of the landscape of Kelmscott and the setting of the Manor.
10. Proposals to site alternative energy equipment in the vicinity of Kelmscott will be rigorously assessed. Wind turbines and solar panels have the potential to change the character of the village.
11. Light pollution will be monitored and proposals that have the potential radically to change the night sky at Kelmscott should be resisted.
12. Opportunities to enhance the wildlife value of the land around Kelmscott will be taken, as is already the case on Manor Paddock, where the species diversity has been improved.

6.2 Archaeology

1. The protection of Kelmscott's archaeology depends on studying and understanding the artefacts, including the landscape and buildings for which the SAL is responsible; and on conveying that knowledge to those who can influence its future protection.

2. The Society will work with the statutory authorities to try to ensure that the archaeology of Kelmscott Manor, the village and the surrounding countryside is, as far as is practicable, protected.
 3. The archaeology of Kelmscott is a precious educational resource, which will continue to be studied. The Kelmscott Landscape Project has provided a secure basis for the SAL's stewardship. Its findings will continue to be disseminated.
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6.3 The relationship with the village

1. The historical relationship between the village and the Manor will be made clear to visitors.
 2. Visitors will be made aware of the key buildings and their significance on the walk between the car park and the Manor.
 3. The village is the setting of the Manor and the Society will use its influence to protect it from development threats. This will involve continual vigilance. This was a major concern of May Morris.
 4. The Society will make every effort to foster good relations with residents of the village.
 5. Policy will strike a responsible balance between the needs of the Manor and its estate and the amenity of village residents.
 6. The interests of neighbours will not however be allowed prejudice the core values of the property and their long-term preservation and presentation.
 7. Taking its inspiration from May Morris, the Society will do what it can to foster and improve community wellbeing in the village of Kelmscott, contributing materially to community resources where appropriate.
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6.4 Early owners

1. Further research on the early owners will be undertaken.
2. They will feature prominently in the presentation and interpretation of the property.

6.5 William Morris and the Manor

1. The Society will continue to explore, and expound, the role that Kelmscott and its landscape played in the formation of Morris's life as a designer, writer, political philosopher and environmental campaigner.
 2. Morris's feelings for Kelmscott will be clearly understood and used as a guide for the Society's stewardship of the property.
 3. This means a respect for its peace, seclusion and unspoilt character.
 4. It will be a place where visitors can, like Morris, find peace and inspiration.
 5. Presentational material in publications and explanatory displays will present a full picture of Morris - artist, designer, poet, conservationist and political thinker and activist, and man of business.
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6.6 D.G. Rossetti and the Manor

An exposition of Rossetti's creative relationship with Kelmscott will enrich the presentation of the Manor.

6.7 Jane Morris and the Manor

1. Opportunities to advance understanding of Jane Morris and her role at Kelmscott will be actively pursued.
 2. The correct decoration and arrangement of her bedroom is important and will be addressed (see below Gazetteer)
-

6.8 May Morris and Manor

1. May's wishes, as donor of the property, will, be fully understood and where possible respected.
2. Given that the influx of contents from the two Hammersmith houses altered the feel of the interiors in the years following Morris's

death, the house will, so far as is possible, be shown as it was in May's period of ownership, respecting at the same time her desire that it should constitute a memorial to her father.

3. This will be informed by a careful analysis of her memorandum of June 1926 combined with the evidence of the inventory taken by Hobbs and Chambers in August 1939.
4. In its presentation of the Manor the Society will continue to stress May's importance both in her professional and political work, in her long and faithful tenure of the property and in her care for the community of Kelmscott.

6.9 Oxford University and the Manor

Research on Oxford's tenure of Kelmscott, both to inform the Society's long-term care of the building and to understand better the context of the Manor's early institutional existence would be useful.

The university's tenants and their lives at Kelmscott would benefit from further research if, as in the case of E. Scott-Snell their papers can be located.

6.10 Kelmscott and the Society of Antiquaries.

1. The life, work and ideas of William Morris will guide all the Society's actions at Kelmscott.
2. The Society will consolidate its conscientious and professional record as owner and protector of Kelmscott Manor.
3. The history of the Society's early stewardship is worth carefully recording. It should be noted that it is still within the range of oral history. Consideration will be given to identifying and interviewing those with memories of the 1960s at Kelmscott. The film of the building restoration that was made by the Society with Peter Locke and A.R.Duffy will be preserved in secure digital form as it is a particularly interesting and evocative record of the house at that time and the problems which it presented.

4. The relationship between the core purposes of the Society and Kelmscott will be developed constructively for their mutual benefit.
5. Fellows will be made fully aware of this relationship and the way in which the association with Kelmscott and with Morris can provide a focus the Society's research and also enhance and promote the Society's public image.
6. The property needs to be able to support its annual running costs but in a way that is not prejudicial to its core values and the proper preservation of historic assets.
7. Capital projects will be funded from external sources and an active policy and programme of fund raising and grant aid should therefore be strategically pursued.
8. Staffing at the property will provide for professional heritage asset management at Kelmscott.
9. The Society's governance structure will be examined to make certain of continuity of knowledge and experience in the management of Kelmscott. The post of Honorary Curator is one means by which long-term knowledge and experience can be sustained beyond the cycles of the committees and individual staff appointments.
10. The Kelmscott Committee will, from time to time, establish working groups to forward particular strategies.
11. In its presentation of Kelmscott the Society will encompass all aspects of the estate including history, archaeology, art and architectural history and ecology. It should also make certain that its visitors are aware of the purposes of the Society of Antiquaries. This will include the history and future direction of its policy towards the estate, and more generally its national role and mission.

6.11 The Fabric of the Manor House

1. Quinquennial inspections of the fabric will continue to be undertaken by a qualified conservation architect.
2. Particular attention will be paid to their routine maintenance recommendations.
3. The upper parts of the late-17th-century north wing will be repaired within the coming quinquennium.

4. Major repairs will be the subject of applications for grant aid.
5. The recommendations of the quinquennial inspection will be acted upon, notably the works to the upper parts of the north wing and the checking of the electrical installation.
6. Changes made to the external fabric in the 1960s restoration will not necessarily be regarded as sacrosanct.
7. The bathroom window on the main elevation no longer serves its original purpose and should, in view of its prominence, be blocked to reinstate fully the view of the Manor shown in Gere's frontispiece to *News from Nowhere*.

For recommendations on fire and flood, see below.

6.12 The contents of the Manor House – security, fire and flood

1. These risks will be kept under constant review.
2. Good physical security will be backed up by well-maintained electronic systems and these should be subject to regular review and the advice of the local police.
3. Fire protection systems will likewise be subject to regular maintenance, checking and review using the best available advice.
4. Electrical systems and especially appliances will also be regularly checked for their reliability and repair work carried out promptly.
5. Disaster recovery plans, on the model of those in use by the National Trust, will be prepared, maintained and adequately resourced with appropriate equipment and personnel, using the advice of the local fire service with whom regular liaison is essential. During the closed season the more easily moveable contents of the ground floor might in some cases be stored on the first floor. This would reduce the amount that needed to be moved quickly in the event of floods (which appear, at the time of writing, to be an increasing risk). The National Trust maintains an emergency salvage trailer at Coleshill. The Society will discuss with the Trust ways in which this might be made available for emergency use at Kelmscott.

6. Duplicate photographic inventories of contents will be maintained at Kelmscott Manor and Burlington House. They should be accurate and up-to-date. The contents should be checked against them annually with the Society's Collections Manager.
 7. The security of the contents on open days is the responsibility of the staff, assisted by the volunteer room stewards. It is important that the volunteers are made aware of the security issues.
 8. Loans to exhibitions will be permitted when they advance scholarship and understanding and when the property can derive tangible benefit from them in terms of reputation, reciprocal arrangements or funded conservation work. They do however involve security and conservation risks which will always be assessed and mitigated.
-

6.13 The Contents of the Manor - preventive conservation and repair

The policies for conservation are set out in Helen Lloyd's report of 1995, the main conclusions of which are as follows:

1. Care will be taken to control light levels, particularly in the rooms with precious and vulnerable textiles. This is an area where the volunteers can be very helpful if properly trained. It is essential that the volunteers are given information on preventive conservation and made to feel part of the process of caring for the contents.
2. Extended opening will be matched by increases in the hours allowed for conservation cleaning.
3. 'The Manual of Housekeeping', published by the National Trust, will be a constant source of guidance on the care of the interiors.
4. The internal environment in terms of temperature and relative humidity will be subject to continuous monitoring. The adjustment, adaptation or replacement of the current heating system to achieve and maintain a controlled internal environment is a priority.

5. Levels and patterns of visiting, particularly the numbers of visitors in the Manor at any one time, will be compatible with the Society's conservation obligations and with the objective of preserving the character of the house.
6. The timed-ticket provisions are currently an essential part of the conservation policy for the Manor.
7. The policy of resisting the introduction of posts and ropes will be continued.
8. Regular condition surveys will be undertaken and repair work commissioned from reputable and accredited professional conservators.
9. The contents will be protected from moths, beetles, silverfish and other pests.

There is considerable visitor interest in conservation work. Where it is consistent with safety and efficiency some conservation work carried out under visitor observation is desirable. (The National Trust's trained volunteer book conservators sometimes operate in this way).

6.14 The Contents of the Manor – acquisitions and disposal (extract from the Society's Acquisition and Disposal Policy)

1. The collections are not regarded as ever-expanding. Kelmscott's character would be significantly impaired by extraneous additions.
2. The SAL does not aspire to tell the whole Morris story at Kelmscott.
3. The Manor is a celebration of part of Morris's vision of history, social life, buildings and landscape, not a representative display of his artefacts.
4. The following specific categories of chattels may be acquired:
 - material relating to the pre-Morris history
 - material at Kelmscott during the period of the Morris family occupancy
 - material relating to the connections between Kelmscott village, the Morris family and the Manor
 - items associated with Rossetti's occupancy of the Manor

- material about Miss Mary Lobb
- material about Frederick Startridge Ellis, co-tenant in succession to Rossetti.

It has been noted that some Morris family contents were unfortunately disposed of by the Society in the early days. Original Morris family contents will not be disposed of.

6.15 The arrangement and presentation of the interiors

1. Objects will as far as possible be displayed in a domestic fashion, as they were during the occupation of the family. Exceptional measures (e.g. display cases) should be used sparingly and confined where possible to new exhibition rooms.
2. A useful guide to presentation will be May Morris's account of the house in the memorandum attached to her will of 1926. Her room-by-room annotated lists, supplemented by the Hobbs and Chambers inventory of 1939 and early photographs and drawings provide solid evidence of the early arrangements.
3. Although a policy of trying to revert to a single moment of time in the history of the Manor may prove neither desirable nor practicable in all instances. There will however be opportunities to reinstate features, arrangements and contents in ways that are true to the spirit and appearance of the Kelmscott so cherished by Morris and subsequently arranged by his family.
4. Where there is a conflict between the proper display of early fabric on the one hand and the reinstatement of the Morris family arrangements on the other, ways should be sought of achieving both objectives if possible.
5. **Paint Research.** A programme of historic paint research will be undertaken in all the show rooms of the manor. The colours used during Morris and Rossetti's occupation should be reinstated wherever they are found.
6. **Floor Coverings:** Consideration should be given to using 'sacrificial' modern versions of traditional rugs, rather than leaving floors bare.

7. **Record Photography.** The care of the interiors of Kelmscott has been guided by surviving historic photographs and inventories. Photographs of the interiors and a written record will continue to be kept, so that future curators can understand the changes made by the Society.
8. **Volunteers.** Volunteers will well briefed on changes in presentation policy and able to explain them to visitors. They would generally value more information on the house and contents. Study days on different topics during the winter months would be popular and useful. (see also 6.13.2)

6.16 The Manor Gardens: planting and maintenance

In the absence of significant new research fundings the over-riding aim will be the continuation of the policy for the garden agreed in 1994 and recorded in Hal Moggeridge's article. In practice this involves the creative conservation involved in all responsible gardening. The care of the Kelmscott garden will entail constant renewal, not necessarily replicating exact specimen with exact specimen, but achieving an effect which is true to the qualities cherished by Morris. In practical terms this involves:

1. In the front garden continuing to use Gere's illustration as a guide.
2. Maintaining the lawn garden, unless with the help of volunteers it is felt that the recreation of a vegetable garden would be of such interest to visitors that the additional work could be justified.
3. Renewing the trees in the orchard as becomes necessary, usually replacing like with like and perpetuating the historic varieties of apples. The surrounding meadow should be managed and cut so as to continue and enhance the scatter of wild flowers.
4. In the Mulberry Garden, continuing the present policy, which follows Morris's dictum: 'On the whole, I think the best and safest plan is to mix up your flowers, and eschew great masses of colour'.
5. The ancient Mulberry itself will be cut back and pruned to prolong its life as long as possible.

6. Continuing to maintain the small area of vegetables in the Privy Garden
7. Wightwick Manor has an early photograph of the topiary dragon 'Fafnir'. This might be used as a guide for future treatment. Additionally there is a drawing by F.L.Griggs (c.1910) and a description of the worm itself in William Morris, *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung and the Fall of the Niblungs*.¹
8. Options for the future include:
 - The reinstatement of a traditional timber palisade and gates on the western boundary on the model of the surviving fragment and early photographs.
 - The replanting of the short elm avenue in the Paddock with limes.
 - A research project to extend our knowledge of the garden and its history.

As Moggeridge concluded: 'The garden seeks to provide the visitor with a peaceful and satisfying inspiration from plants, comparable to that which Morris himself enjoyed when he was at Kelmscott.'

6.17 The farm buildings

1. Quinquennial inspections of the fabric will continue to be undertaken by a qualified conservation architect.
2. Particular attention will be paid to their routine maintenance recommendations.
3. Further research into the history of the farm buildings and other ancient estate structures such as boundary walls, field barns etc. will be undertaken using the latest methods of buildings archaeology to establish their chronological relationships.
4. New uses will not detract from their utilitarian and traditional character, details and surfaces.

¹ Book II (first edition 1877) 'Sigurd slayeth fafnir the Serpent', pp 138-40.

5. A programme for funding the repair of those most in need will be a priority for the Society. Such a programme will seek sources of grant aid from a range of charitable institutions and will be based on a reasoned and cogent policy for their repair, display and use.
-

6.18 The cottages

1. Quinquennial inspections of the fabric will continue to be undertaken by a qualified conservation architect.
 2. Particular attention will be paid to their routine maintenance recommendations.
 3. The cottages will be alienated.
 4. Their history and their significance as instructive examples of the impact of Morris's thinking on architectural design will be properly explained to visitors. A leaflet on the village and its buildings given out at the car park would cover this.
 5. The Society will retain an open mind on their future use whether for staff accommodation, the accommodation of the village community or visitors.
 6. Great care will be taken to retain historic details and alterations should be avoided.
 7. Repairs will be undertaken as specified in the quinquennial.
-

6.19 Visitor access and management

1. **Visitor numbers: targets, costs and benefits.** The society will commission from an experienced independent consultant a comprehensive business plan and strategy for opening. The present arrangements for visiting, with opening to the general public two days a week, and a further day for coach parties, have serious disadvantages. The Society found unconvincing the arguments in the former draft HLF application for increasing the numbers of visitors to 40,000, from the present 18,000. The aim will be to move cautiously to increasing visitor numbers to 25,000 over 5 years.

2. **Staffing.** Additional income from the extended opening, proposed above, could be used to support the existing staff and ensure that they work only the hours that they are contracted to do.
3. **Volunteers.** The continuing help, support and loyalty of the volunteers is essential, if the property is to remain a viable operation. They are central to the welcome afforded to visitors and crucial to the security of the collections. Their wellbeing is therefore of considerable importance and will be fostered.
4. **Car Parking.** The present car parking arrangement has several benefits. Cars are kept away from the centre of the village. The walk from the car park gives visitors the opportunity to see many of the buildings at Kelmscott which were significant for Morris, including the church and his grave. It brings trade to the pub. The disadvantage of the present arrangement is that the car park is outside the ownership of the Society. The Society will therefore remain aware of the need for a stable long-term solution to this issue. Shelter for staff supervising the existing car park will be provided.
5. **Coach parking.** Coach parties are reluctant to be separated from their coach. The possibility of parking coaches in other locations nearby will be investigated.
6. **Visitor Reception.** The Society will consider making use of existing historic farm buildings for visitor reception, ticket office etc. rather than the present temporary structures.
7. **Exhibition space.** Consideration could be given to creating interpretative exhibition space near the ticket office.
8. The Restaurant and shop are over-crowded at busy times and are consequently less profitable than they could be. Consideration has been given in earlier plans to using the south-east barn as a restaurant. A more detailed assessment is needed of the various options (one possibility among several is to extend the present tearoom by building on the footprint of the thatched building formerly in the farmyard, shown on the bird's eye view by E.H. New to provide space for service uses or extra seating).

9. **Sewage Disposal.** With such a low-lying set of buildings, close to the river, sewage disposal will always be difficult, even with relatively modest levels of visiting. Significant increases in visitor numbers would almost certainly involve major expenditure on a new sewage plant.
10. **Corporate entertaining.** Issues such as car parking, and the importance of the vernacular buildings in their relatively unaltered state, may present constraints on ambitious corporate entertaining. Careful assessment of the potential will be needed.
11. **Website.** The property has a good website. This will be developed to give more effective access to the property and its collections. Virtual visits are one way in which the property can be made known to a much wider public without damage to its fabric, contents and atmosphere.

7. Implementation of the Conservation Management Plan

- The policies in this plan, once agreed, will be the subject of a draft implementation strategy with a time line and targets .
- This will be used as the context for applications for grant aid and other fundraising programmes.
- The strategy will be flexible enough to allow alteration in relation to the requirements of funding bodies and other partners.
- Further detailed research on individual issues will be necessary to allow effective implementation of the plan. In particular Heritage Impact Assessments for individual areas, buildings and rooms will need to be drawn up dealing with their various elements according to the CMP discipline (see the introductory paragraphs to Kelmscott Manor and its Estate: Significance p. 39.)
- Copies of this plan will be distributed to all staff and committee members involved in the care of Kelmscott.

8. Measures for monitoring and reviewing of the Plan

- This plan will be reviewed and revisited and, if appropriate, revised every five years.

9. Gazetteer: The Manor and its interiors

The historical analysis and research in what follows is mainly the work of Nicholas Cooper. We have revised it, added supplementary information and contributed sections on significance, issues and policies to conform with HLF guidelines.

9.1 The Fabric of the Manor House

A summary of this detailed analysis of the fabric is to be found in 3.8.

Periods referred to in the descriptions below –

- 1 c.1600-1610
2. c.1665-70
- 3a. c.1700
- 3b. c.1730-40
4. c.1871-1913 (William & Jane Morris)
5. 1939 (Oxford University)
- 6a. 1965-68 (Society of Antiquaries)
- 6b. Later work (do.)

Not every feature in the house can be dated with certainty.

9.1.1 Period 1: Early seventeenth century

Architectural detail suggests that the earliest part of the house may be of the early seventeenth century.¹ A deed of 1834, evidently repeating a formula from an earlier document now lost, describes a certain Thomas Turner as having been the builder of the house, and the surviving portions of the original building appear to correspond closely in size and arrangement to the house described in the inventory of Thomas Turner (d.1611). (A window mullion in the attic

¹ All principal timbers are of elm, and tree-ring dating is therefore not practicable.

seems to bear a scratched inscription that may be read as I W [over] K 1571 Oct 11. These scratches have however clearly been deepened subsequently, and cannot be relied on as giving a date for the building.)

The early house was built to a U-plan, with wings projecting west. The central range, a single room deep, contains the hall with entrance through a screens passage at its southern end; there were two service rooms to the south and two parlours to the north with a principal stair between them rising in two flights to the first floor. A second stair at the south end rises from ground floor to attics. The first floor contained five chambers; the attic floor seems to have been open from north to south forming a species of simple gallery, perhaps with the wings partitioned off. The house was gabled to east and west; gables to the central range have been heightened.

In all essentials, this house remains.

9.1.2 Period 2: c.1665-70

The house was altered and enlarged, probably around 1665-70, by Thomas Turner (d.1682) whose coat of arms appears on fireplaces in two rooms. The work may have been occasioned by his marriage with the daughter of a knight and by the grant of arms in 1665.

Principal of these works was the building of a new parlour/chamber wing to the east of the north end of the house. This was built for prestige as well as for additional space: it has floors and ceilings at a higher level than those of the earlier building, and each outer face is crowned by a line of gablets with pedimented architraves to windows.

Other work was probably carried out at the same time. This included the building of a two-storey closet bay on the north face of the north-west parlour; perhaps the rebuilding of the kitchen

chimney stack and secondary stair on the south front; and the raising of the central gables over the central (hall) range to east and west. A glazed enclosure in the centre, north, parlour (now removed, but shown in early plans and photographs) may have been installed at this period.

This work remains substantially intact.

9.1.3 Period 3a & 3b: Early eighteenth century

Minor alterations were undertaken in the early eighteenth century. This work included:

- The installation of overmantel and wainscot in the NE parlour (possibly in two phases).
- The addition of a single-storeyed service range extending the SW wing.
- The temporary division of the house, probably S of the screens passage on the ground floor and S of the Hall chamber on the 1st.
- Probably the insertion of a stair from first floor to attic in the northern part of the house, in the space now occupied by the w.c.
- Probably the alteration of the north door, and the construction of a shallow cellar beneath and east of the principal stair.

These three last works may have been done in consequence of the sub-division of the house in c.1728 (see Owners and occupants: George Turner) whereby Thomas Ford occupied kitchen, two butteries, a chamber called Mr.Castle's room, maid's chamber, two garrets over them, brewhouse and dairy house.²

At some unknown date, certain windows of the house were blocked. These, showing in old photographs, include the small window lighting the steps from William Morris's room to the Tapestry Room, the window lighting the China Closet, the outer lights of the window lighting the north bay in the Tapestry Room (former Bachelor's

Bedroom). In addition the south window of Jane Morris's bedroom and the north and south windows of the Cheese Room were also blocked. As two of these last windows overlooked one another in close proximity it is likely that they were blocked when the property was subdivided in 1728. The South window of the Cheese room remains blocked.

Beyond the Period 1 SW wing a further single-storeyed service wing extends further W. This is probably of the 18th century but the exact date is not known. Nor is it known why the alignment does not follow that of the main body of the house.

9.1.4 Period 4: nineteenth and early twentieth century

Nineteenth century work seems to have been minor, and little of it remains. The fireplaces of certain rooms (see the room by room descriptions below) received new surrounds or grates.

Some work is known to have been done by William and Jane Morris. This included:

- Inserting a w.c. on the first floor, in the space probably occupied by an 18th century stair from first floor to attic at the northern end of the house.
- Adding a larder against the west door of the house, in the angle between the central range and the SW wing.
- Re-opening a blocked window in the China Closet off the Panelled Room.³
- Re-laying floors in stone flags and timber.⁴

Other unspecified work was carried out in 1924.⁵

2 PRO PROB.11/665 f.376 George Turner of Kelmscott. The date of 1728 is inferred from the fact that on George Turner's death in 1734, Ford had six years remaining of a 12-year lease.

3 Probably referred to letter W.M to Jenny 6.3.1878 'The new window is made, & the little room looks so much better for it.' Letters, ed. Kilvin, I, 452. The window is marked 'new' in J.H. Middleton's drawing of the north elevation, 1891.

4 SPAB files Kelmscott Manor

5 do.

9.1.5 Period 5: twentieth century: work for Oxford University 1939-40

When Oxford University acquired the house in 1939, repairs and improvements were needed in order that the house might be let. On the recommendation of the SPAB, this work was undertaken under the direction of T.G.Davidson, FSA, FRIBA, of Whiteleaf, Aylesbury, Bucks and executed by Lovell & son of Marlow.⁶

It appears that not all that was proposed at that time was carried out, but the work done included:

- The creation of a passage on the first floor, taken out of the west side of the principal hall chamber, in order to improve access between the northern and southern parts of the house.
- The conversion of a smaller chamber to the south of this into a bathroom and the insertion of a window to light it.
- The conversion of the larder by the west door into a w.c.
- The enlargement of the window lighting the bay to the Green Room.
- The removal of the glazed enclosure in the north parlour/hall and its re-use in part to form a partition on the first floor.
- The insertion of central heating, from a boiler in the old kitchen.
- The installation of electricity.

It is not known how much repair was undertaken as distinct from alterations.

A little work was done subsequently, notably the repair of an area of bulging wall, probably on the east front.⁷

6 SAL preliminary plan for proposed works, 1939; Oxford, Bodleian Library, University Archives, LA 3/OXF 7A/2. Some uncertainty remains about the extent of this work; no specifications or contemporary photographs survive, and information derives from the 1939 plan, a few letters between the tenant and the University authorities, and from comparison of photographs taken in the 1920s and 1960s.

7 OU archives LA3/OXF 7A/8 5 June 1956 specification for repairs. 'Take down existing bulging wall approx. 3 yards super to left of front door below 1st floor window & rebuild.' It may be that the 'front door' referred to is in fact not the east but the north door; such an area was in fact rebuilt by Donald Insall & Associates. for the Society of Antiquaries.

9.1.6 Period 6a & 6b: twentieth century: Work for the Society of Antiquaries 1964-7; 1970s-2004

When the Society of Antiquaries acquired the house in 1962 the house was in a poor state of repair, while additional work was needed to facilitate opening to the public and to improve accommodation within the house for a resident caretaker. The work was carried out by Donald Insall and Associates, architects, under the supervision of Peter Locke, RIBA. Donald Insall wrote of the need to separate the domestic quarters from the show rooms. 'The solution was happily quite straightforward and involved no new physical barrier between the two halves of the house. At the north end, a new porch entry for visitors was added, designed in the still valid Cotswold vernacular. This restores the doorway to its former and rightful position, and incorporates a small cloakroom for the use of visitors. To give access to the attic from the north end of the upper floor, a split stair was inserted of the only type that would go in the space available. These arrangements enable the visitor to leave at the north end thus maintaining the privacy of the domestic south section of the house.'

The principal work done in 1964-7 included:⁸

Structural repairs:

- The repair and renewal of windows, including mullions.
- The partial rebuilding and reinforcement of the central part of the north front.
- Extensive masonry repairs elsewhere.
- Substantial renewal of roof timbers and the re-laying of the roof.
- Substantial renewal of other structural timber throughout the house.
- Repair and re-laying of floors throughout the house.
- The partial rebuilding of chimney stacks.
- Renewal and rebuilding of parapets.
- Renewal of the south stair.
- Renewal of services and provision of modern cooking, heating etc.
- Facilities.

8 Summarised in D.Insall, 'Kelmescott Manor and its Repair', *Monumentum*, 8, 1972, reprinted in Linda Parry (1996) p106-22.

- The opening of a blocked ground floor window on the north side of the SW wing.
- The replacement of cast iron rainwater goods with wood.

Alterations:

- The addition of a new entrance porch and w.c. on the north front.
- The removal of the nineteenth/twentieth century lavatory from the west front.
- The reinstatement of the screen in the north hall, but on the line of a former (probably eighteenth century) partition and partly re-using old work.⁹
- The removal of a (probably nineteenth century) fireplace surround and grate from the hall and the opening-up of the seventeenth-century fireplace.
- The removal of the 1st floor w.c. and the insertion of an alternate-tread stair from 1st to 2nd floor.
- The insertion of a fitted corner cupboard in the hall.
- The removal of a (probably nineteenth century) fireplace surround from William Morris's room.
- Refurbishment of the domestic and service areas.
- The removal of the partition between the tapestry room and its bay (the former Bachelor's Bedroom).
- The walling-up of a former carriage door in the E end of the S wall of the low, Period 3, SW service wing.
- The blocking of a first floor window in the N face of the Period 1 SW wing
- Alteration of the bathroom window.
- Since this major period of alteration and repair, other work has included:
- The insertion of two cast-iron fireplaces of c.1905 on the 1st floor.

Sections on significance, issues and policy in relation to the Fabric of the Manor House are to be found in the appropriate places in the main body of the plan under this heading. (Sections 4.5/ 5.11/ 6.11)

⁹ This work appears to have been done as the result of a misapprehension concerning the work done by the University in 1939-40. Society of Antiquaries, Kelmscott Committee minutes for 9.12.1964 include the recommendation that 'the North entrance [ought] to open, logically, into a reformed screens passage (the old screens having been removed elsewhere by Miss Morris).' There is no other evidence that May Morris undertook such work.

9.2 Individual Rooms in the Manor

Room names are given as in 2012. The sources of earlier room names are:

- 1611 Inventory of the goods of Thomas Turner, Oxford, Oxfordshire Record Office, 65/3/29
- 1833 Inventory of the goods of Charles Turner, Reading, Museum of English Rural Life, MS 1971 A2/14
- 1870 Inventory of the goods of James Turner, d.1869, Reading, Museum of English Rural Life, MS 1971 B12/7
- 1889 Plan made by J.H. Middleton, London, Society of Antiquaries
- 1895 William Morris, Gossip about an Old House on the Upper Thames
- 1926 May Morris, Memorandum of Wishes, London, Society of Antiquaries
- 1939 [Davidson]. Plans for alterations, London, Society of Antiquaries
- 1939 [H&C] Hobbs & Chambers, Faringdon. Inventory of the contents, London, Society of Antiquaries
- 1964 Survey, Donald Insall, Society of Antiquaries.

– Ground Floor –

9.2.1 Green Room

History

- 1964 Sitting room
- 1939 (H&C) Green room
- 1926 Green room
- 1889 Green room
- 1870 Back sitting room
- 1833 Sitting room & china cupboard
- 1611 Inner parlour

Part of the original structure, spanned by an E-W beam, period 1. Probably the 'Inner Parlour' of the 1611 inventory. Modernised in Period 2, with a bay added to the north and a new fireplace surround with the Turner arms.

The bay may originally have been a separate, heated closet or study. It is shown partitioned off in 1921 Country Life photographs and in the 1889 and 1939 plans; this may have had its own fireplace: the 1939 plans appear to show an additional flue on the first floor, and the stack is deeper than it need be if it only served the Green room and Jane Morris's room. George Turner's will of 1734 mentions 'a study of books.' This cannot be located with certainty, but may refer to this space.

The floor in the 1939 plan was stone. This was the floor introduced by Webb and Morris to replace the 'machine tiles' noted in the plan of 1895.¹⁰ At some stage the stone was replaced in concrete and following the severe flood of 2007 a lime concrete floor lined out to resemble slabs replaced this.

In 1873, Jane wrote to Philip Webb that she intended to decorate the fireplace with the Morris 'Swan' and 'Artichoke' tiles. Missing tiles were replaced by the Society with 'Sunflower' and 'Snakehead' 1965-8.

The room hung with the 'Kennet' chintz shown in old photographs. This however was designed in 1883 and was presumably hung to go with the lost painted decoration, devised by Morris. The hangings are shown in Frederick Evans's photograph of 1896. In 1892 Morris wrote to Jenny 'I got in such a mess down in the Green Room, and painted myself so much that I feel quite happy sitting up here in the tapestry [room] elegantly and like a gentleman.'¹¹ No trace of green paint has yet been found on the walls but panelling from the overmantel taken down in the Society's restoration in the 1960s and now in store at the property retains original colour below a modern treatment. There are spots on the mantel shelf of a similar colour, and on the shutters and door it appears that the original colour survives beneath the modern white paint.

Extract from May Morris Memorandum:

Green Room hung with "Kennet" much faded||
Very worn Turkey carpet from Red House||Persian

10 Illustrated in Parry (1996) Fig. 92. The pencil annotations on the plan are by Morris and relate to a letter of this date. See Kelvin Vol. IV p.333, letter 2422.

11 Kelvin Vol. III, p.405, letter 1996

rug, skins||Gateleg table|| Large wooden sofa – Queen Square, fitted with Wandle chintz cushions and mattresses||Morris easy chair|| Two Cromwell chairs in stamped velvet and chintz covered (Wandle)|| Empire chair – Sussex chairs||Large graffito [sic] chest My carved chair from Hammersmith|| two copper candlesticks (Morris)|| Three gres pots.

Significance

- One of the most important interiors of the Morris period, better documented than some other rooms.

Issues

- The shape of the room has been change by the removal of the closet partition by Oxford University.
- The green paintwork that gave the room its name has been covered by subsequent treatments or lost.
- The Philip Webb panelling from above the fireplace was removed to storage in the work of 1960s.
- The lime concrete floor is not historically the correct material.

Policy

- Reinstate the partition to the closet to restore the original shape of the room.
- Reinstate the Webb panelling following structural work in Jane's Room
- Undertake paint research and redecorate the room in the Morris colour.
- Consult May Morris's memorandum for the contents.
- Introduce a suitable Eastern rug.

9.2.2 North Hall

1964 Staircase Hall & cellar
1939 (Davidson) garden hall
1939 (H&C) Passage [outside Green Room] & Lobby to Panelled room
1926 Passage [outside Green Room] & Lobby to Panelled room
1893 Lobby & 'a kind of pantry'
1889 Entrance hall & closet
1870 Wine closet
1833 Lobby [adjoining staircase] ? ale/wine cellars ? pantry
1611? Buttery



Fig. 27 The Green Room



Fig. 28 The Green Room in 1921 (from Country Life)



Fig. 29 Overmantel panel by Philip Webb removed from the Green Room in the 1960s

William Morris and his family seem to have used the north door, into this lobby from the garden, as their normal entrance, and it is through this door that the house is entered in Gossip about an old House.

The history of this area is not clear. It is now entered from the north by a door inserted in 1965-8, possibly (but not certainly) in the position of an earlier opening. The previous north door lay slightly to the east of this, but this may itself have been an alteration. A recess in the east wall marks a former window, blocked by the period 2 additions beyond. The location of this room, leading out of the Hall at its high end, is typical of a parlour, but the lack of any evidence of heating suggests that it may have served as a buttery, which is listed in 1611 and cannot be located elsewhere.

The space was described by William Morris as 'a curious passage or lobby, a part of which is screened into a kind of pantry by wooden mullions which have once been glazed, and offer somewhat of a problem to the architect'. The 1889 and 1939 plans and the 1921 photographs show Morris's 'pantry' as a formerly glazed enclosure occupying the southern part of this space. There is evidence, no longer visible, for a former door leading into this area from the Old Hall,¹² while the line of the former partition is shown by a scar in the ceiling and by differences in the density of nail holes for former ceiling laths, north and south of this line.

The 1889 and 1939 plans also show a shallow cellar occupying the north-western part, extending beneath the stair.

In 1939 (period 5) the formerly glazed enclosure was dismantled and elements used to construct a partition, forming a passage past the Hall chamber on the first floor. When in 1965-8 the north door was moved slightly to the west, elements of the glazed enclosure again dismantled and used to construct the existing screen that forms a passage leading N-S from the north door of the house leading through to the N hall. This was built on the line of the former cellar's east wall. It is not known

what evidence there may have been for the use of these glazed elements here,¹³ and the head beam into which the studs of this screen are housed and which formerly housed those of the cellar partition has been replaced.

The existing north door, relocated in 1965-8, is in line with the inner door that leads through from the North hall to the Hall and its position is plausible for the period 1 house. However, no clear evidence of alteration can be seen in the only close-up photograph of the area before the door was moved in 1965-8, and the north door that is shown in this photograph appears to be of seventeenth-century date.

The new north door of 1965-8 now lies within a wholly new porch which projects from the north front of the house. This also contains the w.c. added at that time.

A full height cupboard at the eastern end of the south wall may mark a blocked door leading through from the hall to the former glazed enclosure.

The flagged floor may have been inserted by Morris in 1895.¹⁴

Extract from the May Morris Memorandum:

'PASSAGE||Relics: (round inlaid metal box||(little oak box||(backgammon board 'Cabage [sic] and Vine' Tapestry. W.M.'s own piece||Durer Apocalypse prints Two frames'

'LOBBY to panelled room|| Embroidered wool hanging 'If I can' Red House' – William Morris|| Two red chinese chairs and ditto chest-gold lacquer|| Some of the Samson hanging|| Gres de Flandres pots (three big ones, four others) ||Gate leg table||Durer's Apocalypse prints Two frames||Embroidered hangings W.M. (Red House)|| St. Catherine|| 2 Persian Peacocks and big Persian Candlestick'

13 See page 17, n.1

14 corr.7.November 1895 Philip Webb to Hughes, builder, Faringdon. Copy in SPAB Kelmscott files

12 Information from Alan Frost.

Significance

- An important space created in the Period 2 remodelling, and the principal entrance hall for Morris and his family, changed by a series of relatively modern alterations.

Issues

- Oxford University removed the corner closet partition in 1939-40 and introduced it to the first floor. It was reintroduced to the hall in 1965-8 on a different alignment to create pseudo screens passage. The position of the external door was adjusted when the porch was created at this time. A window at the foot of the stairs was unblocked in 1939.

Policy

- Ultimately this space should be returned to its layout before 1939 by the reintroduction of the pantry partition in the position described by Morris above and possibly the re-blocking of the window at the foot of the stairs with the fitted cupboard shown in the early photographs.
- Examine for traces of early paint schemes and reinstate the Morris period scheme.
- Consult May's memorandum for contents.

9.2.3 Panelled Room (White Room) & china closet

1964	William Morris's drawing room
1939	(Davidson) Drawing room
1939	(H&C) Panelled room & China Pantry
1926	Panelled room & China room out of Panelled room
1893	'Once the great parlour'
1889	Panelled room
1870	Parlour
1833	Best Parlour
1734	Great Parlour

The principal parlour of the house, added at period 2 (1665-70).

Described by Morris (*Gossip about an Old House on the Upper Thames*) as:

'once the great parlour (the house is not great at all remember) and is now panelled with pleasing George 1st panelling painted white: the chimneypiece is no

doubt of the date of the building, and is of rude but rather amusing country work; the windows in this room are large and transomed, and it is as pleasant as possible; and I have many a memory of hot summer mornings passed in its coolness amidst the green reflections of the garden.'

The room was redecorated in the eighteenth century, possibly in two phases (periods 3a & 3b). Stone fireplace with architrave surround and Turner arms; period 2. Chimneypiece over with a panel set in a bolection frame between reeded pilasters which rise to a moulded cornice, perhaps early eighteenth century (period 3a). The room is otherwise surrounded with wainscot of a different character, raised and fielded in two heights with a chair rail and perhaps of period 3b. 6 panel door with raised & fielded panels. Raised & fielded folding leaf shutters. Known to have been painted white in Morris's occupancy; probably so painted from the first.

A photograph by Frederick Evans in the Metropolitan Museum (68.519) shows that the stonework of the fireplace in Morris's time was painted to resemble an exotic marble. The swags of fruit appear to have been painted en grisaille. This notable decoration, although undoubtedly contemporary with carving of the fire surround, was removed before the Country Life photograph of 1921. There was also a cast-iron, arched fire surround of mid-nineteenth-century date. When Morris wrote 'The chimney piece is no doubt of the date of the building and is of rude but rather amusing country work' he was almost certainly referring here to its painted decoration without which the carving alone would not justify such a description.

Wood block floor, probably inserted by Morris to Webb's specification.¹⁵

Extract from May Morris memorandum

PANELLED ROOM|| Door-mat
'Hammersmith'|| Pile carpet Large round oak table
(Red House the first made)|| Small round oak table
(Mrs. Morris's work table at Red House)||Black
'Webb' settle (Red House)||Large sofa (wicker)

¹⁵ See p.20 n.2.

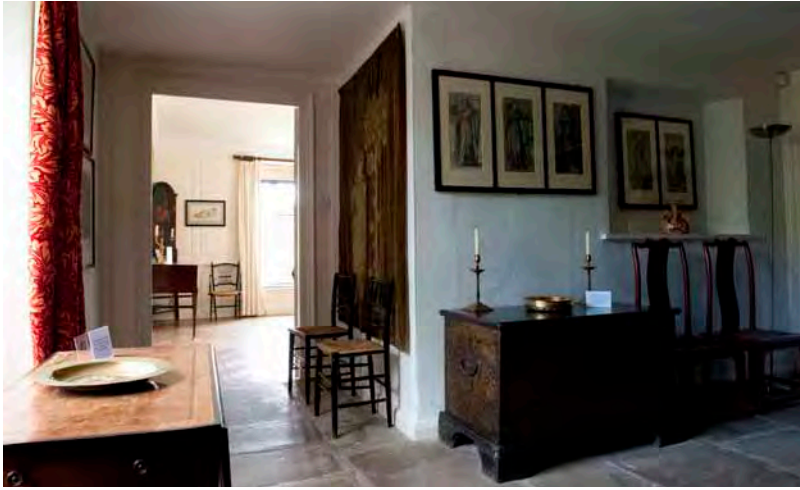


Fig. 30 The North Hall interior from the east



Fig. 31 The North Hall interior from the west



Fig. 32 The North Hall in 1921 (from Country Life)



Fig. 33 The Panelled Room



Fig. 34 The Panelled Room

Queen Square with embroidered fittings||Dutch Chinese corner cupboard (containing "German" and other glass)||Old square piano||Pair of Sheffield plate candelabra|| Morris easy chair|| Sussex chairs|| All the fireplace metal things|| large convex mirror and small one||Water colour drawings|| Caudebec by T.M.Rooke|| Dieppe by [ditto] ||Naworth Castle (by May Morris|| Jenney and May at Naworth by George Howard Earl of Carlisle|| 'Waterwillow' copy of the Dante Gabriel Rossetti picture by C.F.M|| Portrait of Mrs. Wm Morris by Rossetti|| Chalk drawings by Rossetti Jenny and May

[NB in May's note of the Cheese Room (q.v.) she mentions a design for Rossetti's Pomagranate and Lily cushion (now hanging in William Morris's bedroom). The cushion itself was then in the Panelled Room.]

Significance

- An important interior of the Period 2 extension with eighteenth-century panelling.
- A room which is thought to have had a profound influence on Philip Webb's approach to interior decoration in which white walls replaced the saturated colours that had characterized much early and mid-Victorian internal decoration.

Issues

- The current paint colour appears to be modern although there are layers of a darkened white beneath.
- The quinquennial survey notes cracks in the panelling some caused possibly by low humidity and others by deflection of the Tapesrty Room floor above.
- Minor conservation repairs are needed to the fireplace and its tiles.
- The fireplace has been stripped of its historic painted decoration, possibly by May Morris.

Policy

- The original decorative treatment survives on the upper surface of the mantel shelf. This should be monitored and, if necessary, conserved.
- Repair the fireplace.
- Monitor cracks and check humidity.
- For contents see the May Morris memorandum.

China Closet

1964 China Closet
1939 (H&C) China Pantry
1833 Closet [adjoining Best Parlour]

Leading off the Panelled Room is the China Closet. This lacks the principal room's panelled shutters and has probably been partitioned off from it from an early date, but it is not known whether this was a part of the Panelled Room originally. There are external scars on the north wall suggesting that the room may originally have had a large, six-light, mullioned and transomed window; but only the central light is now open and this may itself have been opened up by Morris: the 1889 elevation drawing by Middleton marks this window as 'new' and it may be that referred to by Morris in a letter of 1877.¹⁶

The closet is lined on the west side with five heights of fixed shelves on turned columns, probably designed by Webb and inserted by Morris, for the display of china.

Extract from May Morris memorandum:

CHINA ROOM out of Panelled room|| The blue china except twelve blue Hawthorn plates:their place can be filled by some of my less rare blue china|| Normandy carved oak press (containing glass etcetera part of the bequest to the Victoria and Albert Museum) All fittings of fireplaces throughout the house|| Kitchen Furniture|| Books and MSS.to be left||My set of Kelmscott Press books inscribed||The Doves Press Bible||Set of Scott||" of Dickens|| Some Dumas novels||Berners' Froissart 2 vols Morris's Works Collected Edition 24 vols.||" Earthly Paradise belonging to J.A.M. & M.M. -||with poems inscribed|| Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy containing pen and ink drawings of Mrs. Morris by D.G.R.||Fuscus' Herbal||Gerrarde's "|| Mathilolus "|| Ortus Sanitus (1490)|| The Germ|| Oxford and Cambridge

16 Letters, ed. Kelvin, I, 420, William Morris to Jane Morris, 14.Dec.1877; ib. 452, Jane Morris to William Morris, 6.March 1878: 'The new window is made, and the little room looks much better for it; but the stupid Mitchell has daubed the wall outside with nasty whitey-blue cement...'

Magazine || Alexander de Ales: Vitas de Scti Padri (see S.C.Cockerell's note in it) Venice 1475|| Mrs. Morris's presentation copies of W.M.'s first editions|| Defence of Guinevere with W.M.'s corrections bound in red niger by D.Cockerell|| Lancelot du Lac from W.M.'s Library, given me by R.Steele (see note in it)|| Coburger Bible inscribed to W.M.|| Bible 'William Morris, Woodford Hall' (W.M.'s father)|| Book of Common Prayer 1629 (with family records)|| Kelmscott Press Glittering Plain printed on vellum inscribed to 'Janey'|| Tennyson's green bound volumes, inscribed 'William Morris, Exeter Coll:'|| Longfellow ditto|| Keats inscribed D.G.R. 1859|| Poe W.M. Exeter College|| Browning " || Swinburne: all inscribed to W.M.|| Vita Nuova 1829; inscribed D.G.R. to J.M.|| MSS.|| Lancelot du Lac (in 'fine' writing) unfinished || The King's Son and Carle's Son (beginning of a Romance)|| Lancelot du Lac 3 vols|| Illuminated MS. Heimskringla Saga|| " Egil Skallagrimson|| Volume of proofs of the Cupid and Psyche blocks|| ? To be sold for the Estate|| Roots of the Mountains illuminated by Reuter|| Roots of the Mountains illuminated by Reuter|| Ashendene Press Books,|| Dante|| "|| "|| "|| "|| "|| Vincentino's writing book|| My presentation copies of 1st editions of W.M.|| 2 drawings by D.G.R. of Mrs. Morris

Significance

- Probably a closet of the Period 2 design, altered by Morris and Webb who reopened part of the original window and installed the shelves.

Issues

- Original decoration uncertain.

Policy

- Undertake paint analysis and research decoration.
- Note May's memorandum in relation to the contents (although this had evidently become a store room in her time).

9.2.4 Old Hall and Screens Passage

1964 Dining Room
1939 (Davidson) Dining room
1939 (H&C) Dining Room
1926 Dining room

1893 Little Parlour; 'the parlor of the old house'
1889 Dining room
1870 Sitting Room
1611 Hall

The hall of the period 1 house, entered from the south through a door at the centre of a screens passage.

Passage

The screens passage formed the principal entrance of the period 1 house. When the house was divided into two dwellings before 1734 it became the entrance to the southern tenement. Webb's plan of c.1895 is annotated 'Entrance is wood at present. It should be paved'. So the stone floor here is probably Webb's. At the west end of the screens passage, beyond the west door, a larder was added in a lean-to projection, probably by May Morris. This was converted into a w.c. in 1939-40.¹⁷ This addition reflected *inter alia* the evolving circulation of the house, with the original front door to the house having become, by the time of the Morris occupation (and possibly before), more of a service door and the north door more of a polite entrance. 1965-8 framed ledged & braced external doors to E and W were introduced. N-S chamfered ceiling beam.

Significance

- An important survival of the period 1 house altered in subsequent periods.

Issues

- The pantry and then WC of May Morris's time have been removed and a garden entrance to the west reinstated.
- The earlier doors (probably eighteenth-century) were removed in 1965-8. The door to the east garden is shown in the Evans photographs and may be the one used in the entrance to the gents toilets in the farmyard.

Policy

- Leave things as they are.

¹⁷ 1939 plan; OU archives LA 3/OXF 7A/2 1.August 1939 T.G.Davidson



Fig. 35 The China Closet



Fig. 36 The Old Hall



Fig. 37 The Old Hall in 1964 (published in Crossley, Hassall & Salway (2007))



Fig. 38 The Old Hall

Hall

The hall was described by Morris as:

‘.....a delightful little room quite low ceilinged, in the place where the house is ‘thin in the wind,’ so that there is a window east and a window west, and the whole room has a good deal the look of a particularly pleasant cabin at sea, were it not for the elms and the rooks on the west, and the green garden shrubs and the blackbirds on the east. ... Outside this little parlour is the entrance passage ... made by two stout partitions the carpentry of which is very agreeable to anyone who does not want cabinet work to supplant carpentry.’

Photographs before the works of 1965-8 show the room with a simple wooden fireplace surround probably by Webb; this was removed by the Society in period 6 and the period 1 four-centred stone surround opened up. No longer visible, there is evidence on the east side of the fireplace for a former door of unknown date leading through to the north hall (q.v.). The early photographs show a fitted cupboard in this probable former opening.

The use of a painted, panelled overmantle and wall hangings similar to and of the same date as those in the Green Room but of a different pattern (but of a different pattern - Strawberry Thief first printed 1883) suggests that this was a scheme of the same period i.e. 1890s.

Indeed extensive works are documented in this room in 1895/6. Wood block flocking was installed both here and in the Panelled Room at this time. The removal of old floor in this room revealed the remains of a stone stone slab floor which was partly salvaged for use in the service passage and in the corridor at the foot of the stairs.¹⁸

It seems possible that the panelled fire surround was not the first alteration here by the Morris family. In 1871 Jane wrote ‘I am getting the fireplace set straight in the dining room, the one with the broken mantelshelf, and I think it would look well with tiles....They must be blue. The mantelpiece is

stone I find so I am making the masons scrape of the drap paint. The next thing to be thought of is the grate...’¹⁹

East of the fireplace there is now a corner cupboard, inserted in 1965-8 for the display of an introduced collection of Isnik pottery.

The entrance passage runs EW between two period 1, elm, plank-and-muntin screens, with doorway offset from the centre of each. These were repaired in 1965-8 but essentially remain in their original state.

Extract from May Morris’s memorandum

DINING ROOM hung with very faded ‘Strawberry thief’|| Morris black chair|| Two carved chairs, William Morris’s and Mrs Morris’s (one with tapestry mat)|| Sussex chairs|| Carved chest ‘Webb’ sideboard with 1 silver beaker with wreath and feet and 1 ditto engraved with rose|| Round table (old Turner fixture when we came)|| ‘Webb’ steel fender|| Dining table Note: the rest of this (very fine wood) in the attics|| Three Italian Copper water pots (Verona)|| Blue salad bowl. Berne bear plates etc.|| ‘Hammersmith’ door-mat|| Fine Persian Rug.

The plain furnishing of the room indicated in the Country Life photograph of 1921 made a distinct impression on Maud Sambourne on her visit to the Manor of August 1896:

‘This afternoon went with Mrs Henderson and Mrs McNaught for a long walk. We went chiefly with the object of calling on the great William Morris. We did not find him at home as he is somewhere in Iceland [sic] but his daughter was there and she showed us over the place. The house is lovely for its oldness but oh! so so artistic & grubby. The tea was laid out in a barbaric fashion [there] was a loaf on the table and a dirty jam pot that had been broken open through the paper at the top and the spoon too sticky to touch. We did not accept the tea but sat in a row in the plain, painfully plain dining room & stared at Miss Morris.....’²⁰

19 Cherry (2004) p.4

20 Nicholas Salmon & Derek Baker, *The William Morris Chronology* 1996, p.283.

18 Kelvin Vol. IV, letter 2422, p333-334

Maude Sambourne's home 18, Stafford Terrace (now Linley Sambourne House) is decorated with Morris wallpapers and heavily furnished. The 'painful' plainness of the Kelmscott dining room shows how far Morris's personal taste differed from the bourgeois houses decorated with his company's products.

Significance

- One of the main rooms of the Period 1 house.
- A room that was of particular importance to Morris and which was probably decorated by him at the same time as the Green Room.

Issues

- This room was much altered in 1965-8 with the removal of the fire surround and the taking up of the woodblock floor shown in early photographs.
- Some but not all of the removed features are stored at the property. The present arrangement creates a conflict of historical interests in any plans for the future presentation of the room.
- The alteration of the fireplace involved the reduction or possibly gathering/pleating of the textile hangings.
- A fitted cupboard of c.1800 was covered or removed by the installation of the present corner cupboard.
- The paint scheme is not as shown in the 1964 photograph.
- This is one of the most seriously compromised of the Morris interiors at Kelmscott.

Policy

- Research the original paint scheme and consider how the present decoration might be made to conform to its condition in Morris's time.
- Review the options for the fireplace and surrounding textile hangings, balancing the significance of the Morris arrangement against the interest of a major period 1 fireplace.

9.2.5 Old kitchen

1964 Kitchen
1889 Kitchen
1870 Kitchen
1833 Kitchen

A 1964 photograph (National Monuments Record) shows the room lime washed, with an 18th century mantel shelf on brackets placed against the fireplace breastsummer, and with a large hot-water cylinder and boiler placed against the east side of the fireplace, probably by the University in 1939-40.

With a broad fireplace opening in the south wall, probably always the kitchen of the house, though the chimney breast that projects from the south gable has quoins that resemble those of the period 2 work of c.1665-70. West of the fireplace and contained within the same external projection is a winder stair with wooden treads rising to the first and second floors. Within this fireplace opening is a recess for a bread oven beneath the stair on the west, and for some other purpose on the east. The north wall is formed of the style-and-muntin south face of the screens passage. The room is spanned by a N-S, stopped and chamfered beam. Stone flagged floor

Work in 1965-8 involved the removal of the mantel shelf and boiler, the renewal of the stair, and the replacement of all doors.

The contents of the kitchen were listed by Hobbs and Chambers in 1939 as follows:

Deal kitchen table with drawer|| 3 wheelback and 1 spar back chairs...|| Painted Cupboard...|| Painted Cupboard with elm top and iron handles...|| 24 Hour Long Clock in Oak Case...|| Oak Pembroke Table...|| 2 Copper Candlesticks|| "Sussex" Coal crock|| Iron trivet|| Iron log tongs|| Bacon Rack, as fixed to ceiling|| Strip rush matting...|| Rose and Blue Hearth Rug...|| 3 Footstools...|| Folding Bedstead|| Stuffed Owl in glass case [later annotation]

Significance

- The kitchen of the Period 1 house and all successive periods.

Issues

- Loss of nearly all original joinery in 1965-8, with the exception of the stud and muntin partition.
- There is a list of the furnishings in the 1833 inventory and the 1964 photograph shows the appearance of the room prior to the repairs of 1965 but seemingly after alteration by Oxford University in 1939.



Fig. 39 The Old Kitchen today



Fig. 40 The Staircase



Fig. 41 The Staircase in 1921 (from Country Life)

Policy

- The current policy is to make the most of the room's architectural features and pleasing simplicity of appearance following the removal of the custodians to Garden Cottage.
- This policy should be kept under review.
- There is scope for a more faithful restoration of the architectural joinery and decoration but there appears to be nothing of significance of the Morris period that could usefully be reinstated.
- Evidence of its original furniture in the Hobbs and Chambers inventory should be noted.

9.2.6 New kitchen

1964 Scullery & store
1939 [Davidson] [Pantry & Scullery]
1889 Scullery
1870 Scullery
1833 Scullery

Opening off the kitchen and occupying the original (period 1) part of the west wing. Apparently always unheated. The original north window was blocked when (or before) a small larder was added against the original west door from the screens passage; it was opened up again in 1964-7. The 1939 plans provide for the room to be partitioned to provide a store or larder in the southern part of the room; this partition was removed in 1965-8 and a larder formed in the NW corner of the room.

Significance

- Only the volume and structure of the room have significance as a compartment of the Period 1 house.

Issues

- Loss of most original features and introduction of modern fittings.

Policy

- The current use as the volunteers' rest/mess room is important to the functioning of the house. Other uses might be contemplated should another equally satisfactory place be found for them.
- (There has in the past been a suggestion that this room would make a good exit for the tour of the

house. This would provide another opportunity for exhibition displays. See also Hall Chamber, Cheese Room, Bathroom and Jenny's Room).

– First Floor –

9.2.7 Staircase

Almost certainly original to the house. Turned hour-glass balusters, with square newels with bulbous knops and pyramid finials. Later pine treads. At the foot is an arched opening with a re-used (?fourteenth century) post at foot on east side with notch for lapped joint and empty mortice at its head. Door at stair head period 1/2, vertical boards, with planted frame on stair face.

Painted before 1939²¹ & stripped subsequently, possibly by the Society or Oxford University.

Extract from May Morris's memorandum:

'STAIRCASE||Old "blue flower" carpet two ply|| Two Persian candlesticks|| One copper Webb candlestick|| Large candelabra gilt||Two Pictures of scenes in a city|| A small portrait of a gentleman|| A Saint's death|| Parliament Clock by Godfrey Poy [from 'Large candelabra to...Godfrey Poy' bracketed as 'Part of D.G.R's things']||Four brass dishes'

Significance

- Highly significant as the original stair of the period 1 house.

Issues

- In the Country Life photograph of 1921 the oak joinery of the staircase is painted a dark colour, possibly green. This is a colour found elsewhere in the Morris period decoration, in the Garden Hall and certainly in the Green Room. The stair is thought to have been stripped in 1939 or later.
- The stair carpet (still present in 1977) has been removed.

21 OU archives LA 3/OXF 7A/2 1.August 1939 T.G.Davidson

Policy

- Paint research should be undertaken to establish if possible the successive decorative treatment of the staircase. (There are substantial survivals on the soffit of the handrail of earlier painted treatments)
- The staircase could be repainted to resemble its condition in Morris's time. This would be controversial.
- The cupboard which occupied the window embrasure at the foot of the staircase in the 1921 photograph could be reinstated and painted in the correct colour (probably the green that survives beneath modern paint layers on adjacent joinery).
- Note the contents in May's memorandum.
- Reinstall the stair carpet in replica.

9.2.8 Jane Morris's bedroom

1964 Bedroom 1
1939 [Davidson] Bed room
1939 [H&C] Mrs. Morris's bedroom & dressing room adjoining
1926 Mrs. Morris's bedroom & dressing room
1870 ? Spare room
1833 Bedroom no. 3 & closet in no. 3
1611 Chamber over Parlour

Part of the original period 1 house, unaltered save by the addition of a separate closet at the NE in period 2. Walls covered in modern 'Willow Bough' paper. 4-centred chimneypiece; period 1; stone hearth. Modern elm floorboards & skirting casing for pipes. Door, period 1/2, vertical boards, later planted frame on inner face.

Extract from May Morris's memorandum

MRS. MORRIS'S ROOM|| Fourpost bed of Mrs. Morris mere, in which William Morris was born||Satin wood dressing table||Italian "perspective" chest of drawers|| Venetian mirror tortoiseshell Bureau with bookcase (which contains first editions of William Morris etc.) specified elsewhere||Worn Eastern carpet from Red House|| 'Hammersmith' Rug||"Dutch" chinese corner cupboard|| Black 'Webb' What-not || Small table from Queen Square – Mrs Morris's writing table|| sofa and low chair (Morris) Sussex

chairs|| Brass fender and coal box||One pair of Sheffield plate candlesticks, and One Sheffield plate candlestick|| Watercolour of Philip Webb's Study by T.M.Rooke|| Mrs Morris's jewel case, painted by D.G.R. and Mrs. Rossetti||DRESSING ROOM|| 18 cent. Corner washstand & cupboard

[Note: Morris's mother died at the age of 89 in December 1894 and Morris obtained probate on 11th January 1895 so the bed may have been introduced after that time]

Significance

- Once a very important Morris period interior and retaining good earlier features.

Issues

- The arrangement of the room is completely different from that which obtained in Jane Morris's occupation as recorded in the Frederick Evans photograph of 1896. The south window was then blocked and the bed stood against it with its foot towards the fireplace.
- The south window had been unblocked by the time of the Country Life photograph of the Courtyard in 1921, so this must have been undertaken by May or Jane.
- Redecorated by the Society with the pattern 'Willow Boughs' (both the paper and the bed hangings). The original hangings and paper are recorded in the Evans photographs ('Pomegranate' for the paper and 'Small Stem' or 'Large Stem' for the bed hangings. 'Small Stem' and 'Large Stem' were designed by Thomas Clarkson copied by Morris and Co. as early as 1868).²²

Policy

- Research the history of the alteration and re-arrangement of the room.
- Rehang walls and bed according to the Evans photograph.
- The contents should probably be those in the May Morris memorandum.

22 Letter from May Morris to John Quinn from Kelmscott Manor 25th April 1912 "I have been sleeping in Mother's quarters, a charming blue room, with a big four poster bed hung with old chintz - it is the bed my father was born in." Janis Loudraville, *On Poetry Painting and Politics: The Letters of May Morris and John Quinn* (1997) p.112. This suggests that the Pomegranate paper had a blue background. We are grateful to Julia Monteiro for this reference.



Fig. 42 Jane Morris's bedroom



Fig. 43 Jane Morris's bedroom (Photograph by Frederick Evans 1896/7)



Fig. 44 William Morris's bedroom in 1921 (from Country Life)



Fig. 45 William Morris's bedroom (Morris's bed removed in 2012 for exhibition)

Closet (archives office)

- 1939 [H&C] Mrs. Morris's bedroom & dressing room adjoining
- 1926 Mrs. Morris's bedroom & dressing room
- 1833 Bedroom no. 3 & closet in no. 3

Probably added in Period 2, and always separate from the adjoining bedroom. The partition between is made up of vertical pine boards tongued with quirked ovolos and with evidence of former painting. There is no evidence of heating.

The two side lights of the window were unblocked by Oxford University in 1939-40.

Significance

- A Period 2 closet.

Issues

- In Morris's time the two side lights of the window were blocked. They were re-opened by Oxford University.

Policy

- To be faithful to the building as Morris knew it the two side lights should be blocked again but this is probably a case where things should be left as they are as it would be difficult to show this space to the public.

9.2.9 Passage

Extract from May Morris's memorandum

PASSAGE|| Embroidered wool Hanging – Red House|| Three Eastern rugs|| Brass Rubbing from Great Coxwell Church|| 2 'Webb' candlesticks|| Pearson de Morgan copper dish & graffito chest.

Significance

- Communication space including the head of the stairs which is a survival of the Period 1 house.

Issues

- The introduction of the attic stair in the 1960's restoration.
- The re-opening of a blocked window (probably by

May or Jane Morris).

- The 1921 Country Life photograph of the stairs shows a wall paper in this passage.

Policy

- Furnish according to May Morris's memorandum.
- Consider the evidence of the wallpaper.

9.2.10 William Morris's Bedroom

- 1964 William Morris's bedroom
- 1939 [Davidson] un-named (but includes proposed bathroom)
- 1939 [H&C] William Morris's bedroom
- 1926 William Morris's room
- 1833 ? Bedroom no.2
- 1611 Middle chamber

Part of the original period 1 house and retaining its original fireplace opening, but probably reduced from its original size. The character of the framing of the western wall, shown in photographs taken in 1964, suggests that this partition was inserted in the 18th century, perhaps to house an attic stair consequent on the subdivision of the house (see 1.1.7-9: History, Ownership).

A passage room. Morris described this part of the house and his own room (Gossip about an Old House) as having

the peculiarity of being without passages, so that you have to go from one room into another, to the confusion of some of our casual visitors, to whom a bed in the close neighbourhood of a sitting room is dire impropriety. Braving this terror, we must go through the only north room in the house, which is in the junction of the older and newer house, and up three steps into the Tapestry Room...

Davidson in 1939 proposed dividing the room up and inserting a bathroom into its western part (presumably there was already plumbing here because of the adjacent w.c.). This scheme was rejected, partly because of the objection of the incoming tenant.

The Country Life photograph of 1921 shows a painted wooden bolection-moulded surround to

the fireplace. This was probably removed in 1965-8 to reveal the Period 1 four-centred stone surround beneath. The nineteenth-century cast-iron fire surround is shown in the 1921 photograph and may have been introduced by the Turners prior to Morris's tenancy.

The present wallpaper is a replica of the pattern shown in the 1921 photograph and supplants a dark green paper which must have been introduced by the Society (date unknown). There was a dark blue paper here, presumably put up by May, before the 1965-8 restoration.

Extract from May Morris's memorandum

WILLIAM MORRIS'S ROOM|| Carved oak bed with embroidered hangings|| Inlaid cabinet|| Chinese chair (Queen Square)|| Sussex chairs|| Oval Mirror (D.G.R.)|| One pair small 'Webb' candlesticks (D.G.R.)|| Fine Persian Rug over Morris carpet|| Early pencil drawing of Mrs. Morris by D.G. Rossetti|| Standing bookshelf from Hammersmith Library|| Two other wall cases|| Gres de Flandres pots on bookcase|| Two 'Benson' 3 branched candlesticks || Design for Chaucer binding by William Morris|| Durer's 'Melancholia' from W.M.'s study at Hammersmith|| RELICS – red and green lacquer box|| basket-work tobacco box|| inlaid steel and gold casket|| Chinese bronze pot|| Japanese casket inlaid with mother of pearl|| 'Mantegna' engraving from William Morris's library at Hammersmith|| 'Robetta' engraving from William Morris's library at Hammersmith|| Carved book-box

Significance

- William Morris's bedroom and one of the most important rooms of his occupation.

Issues

- The original bolection fire surround has been removed.
- The contents of the room have been simplified.

Policy

- The fire surround would be easy to replicate if it cannot be located in store at the property. It should be reinstated.
- The decoration of the room should conform to the detail shown in the 1921 photograph, notably the ceiling where the large beam was whitewashed.

- The contents should be as in the May Morris memorandum.

9.2.11 Tapestry Room

- 1964 Solar room
- 1939 [Davidson] The Solar
- 1939 [H&C] Tapestry Room & Batchelor's room
- 1926 Tapestry Room & Batchelor's bedroom adjoining
- 1889 Best sitting room
- 1870 Tapestry room & closet
- 1833 Best bedroom no.1

Period 2, with original armorial fireplace. Modern elm floorboards rest on an original grid of intersecting elm beams, possibly deriving from Serlio via the upper room of the Tower of Five Orders at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, illustrated in Robert Plott, *Natural History of Oxfordshire*, 1676, tab. 13.

Redecorated, perhaps in two phases, in the early 18th century (period 3a & 3b; see description) with the introduction of a panelled overmantel, possibly the tapestry hangings, and wainscot shutters and window seats.

Hung with unidentified, mutilated seventeenth century Brussels tapestry showing scenes in the life of Samson. This was formerly tacked onto vertical battens, shown in 1964 photographs (NMRC) but has since been transferred to horizontal battens at head. Possibly installed in period 3a but equally possibly between 1833 and 1870; nail holes in the edge of the overmantel probably remain from the attachment of these hangings.

The room was probably the principal bed chamber in the house until the late nineteenth century, and according to Turner family tradition was occupied by Arthur Young in 1807 or 1808, staying at Kelmscott preparing his *View of the Agriculture of Oxfordshire* (1808).²³

23 Reading, MERL, MS 1791 B9/1 p.15 Mary Elliot Hobbs, *History of Charles Hobbs*. This unpublished history, written in the late 1930s, appears to be based in part on documents and in part of family tradition. 'He [i.e. Arthur Young] was to have the tapestry room, where he



Fig. 46 The Tapestry Room



Fig. 47 The Tapestry Room

William Morris and his family used it as their principal sitting room. Morris described the room as

hung with tapestry of about 1600 [in fact later], representing the story of Samson; they were never great works of art, and now when all the bright colours are faded out, and nothing is left but the indigo blues, the greys and the warm yellowy browns, they look better, I think, than they were meant to look: at any rate they make the walls a very pleasant background for the living people who haunt the room; (it is our best sitting room now though it was once the best bed-room) and, in spite of their designer, they give an air of romance to the room which nothing else would quite do.

Another charm this room has, that through its south window you not only catch a glimpse of the Thames clover meadows and the pretty little elm-crowned hill over in Berkshire. but if you sit in the proper place, you see not only the barn aforesaid with its beautiful sharp gable, the grey stone sheds, and the dove cot, but also the flank of the earlier house and its little gables and grey-scaled roofs, and this is beautiful indeed. ... The chimney-piece of the room is of stone, and the date of the later work; again it is good after its rough country fashion; and in the middle of it, surrounded by mantling by no means inelegant, is the coat-armour of the Turners, argent, a cross ermine, four mill-rhinds sable.

It is uncertain whether the northern bay was ever originally open to the Tapestry room. Though not identifiable in the 1833 inventory, the division of this bay from the body of the Tapestry room was probably made in period 3a or 3b; this is suggested by the window's lacking the eighteenth century

shutters inserted into the other windows of the Tapestry room, and by the fact that the cornice to the body of the room did originally not extend into the bay.²⁴ It is recorded as a separate closet in 1870 and was known and used as the Bachelor's bedroom during the Morris occupancy.²⁵ The Tapestry room hangings were not mentioned in the 1833 inventory but give the room its name in the 1870 inventory. This could mean that they were introduced in the intervening period.

At some time, possibly also in the eighteenth century, the original (period 2) 6 light mullioned window of the closet was blocked save for the central two lights. It was restored to its full width in the 1960s.

Charles March Gere who made the famous drawing of the house for the frontispiece of *News from Nowhere* stayed in the Batchelors' Room on his visits to Kelmscott:

'At Kelmscott Manor I slept in the little powder closet which opens from the Tapestry Room. Morris used to bring me a can of hot water in the morning. He used to tumble out of bed, have his tub, slip into his blue shirt and blue suit, thrust a brush - or maybe only his hands - through his curly hair and beard - all the work of a few moments - and was ready for the day's adventure'.²⁶

Extract from May Morris's memorandum

TAPESTRY ROOM hung with Samson Tapestry||
Fine carpet (N.Persian, 16th-century?)||Two
Persian rugs|| Bear skin||William Morris's
bookcase||Ebony and Ivory cabinet from William
Morris's study at Hammersmith||Big carved oak
chest|| 'Peacock' curtains from Hammersmith||
Eared chair Morris and Company. Copy of one
which Dante Gabriel Rossetti had. Jane Alice

could rest and conduct his correspondence. Elizabeth [Turner, mother of Charles Hobbs, then aged 16] felt honoured to give up her little fourpost bed which just fitted into the dressing room attached.' Dinner is reported to have comprised trout, sirloin, steamed pudding, preserved fruit, cream cheese, home brewed beer and port, followed by tea in the parlour. Young is said to have asked for the family recipe for fish sauce. While the report of Arthur Young's visit is almost certainly based on genuine tradition, the account of dinner may be fanciful - an excuse for M.E.Hobbs to introduce the family's favourite recipes into her account.

24 Society of Antiquaries Kelmscott corr. boxes A.R.Duffy 25.March 1966: cornice to be removed from opening into north closet of Tapestry room.

25 Occupied as such by E.H.New in 1893: David Coc, 'Edmund New's Diary of a visit to Kelmscott Manor House', *Journal of the William Morris Society*, III, Spring 1974, 3-7.

26 Charlotte Gere *Artistic Circles* (2010) p.169.

Morris has the other|| 'Morris' easy chair|| Morris library chair|| Empire chair|| Sussex chairs|| Sofa|| 'Webb' small table|| Satinwood Sheraton table – (Dante Gabriel Rossetti's writing table)|| Standing candelabra (brass)|| Oak table made by Morris and Company for Kelmscott|| Old brass grate and fender|| Picture by Breughel (the younger) 'Tulip Garden'|| BEDROOM ADJOINING|| Bed, washstand mirror etc. Embroidered wool hangings from Red House

Significance

- The most impressive survival of the pre-Morris interiors of the house, expressive of the ownership of the Turner family in the early nineteenth century if not earlier.
- The room used by Dante Gabriel Rossetti as his studio.
- Latterly the favourite sitting room of Morris and his family.

Issues

- The interior that Morris and Rossetti knew has been disordered by the demolition in 1965-8 of the partition between it and the Bedroom, the former seventeenth-century closet. This has led to the re-arrangement of the tapestries and the papering of sections of wall which they used to cover.
- The tapestries now require extensive conservation work (See report by Emma Telford).

Policy

- The bedroom partition should be reinstated and the tapestries rehung in their original configuration. This will require alterations to the textiles especially where they covered doorways and will require thought and ingenuity to secure their long-term protection. Archive photography, notably by Frederick Evans and Country Life shows the earlier arrangement in some detail.
- This work will displace one large tapestry which, in the Morris family occupancy was folded and hung on its side in the (North) Garden Hall. The implications of this displacement will require careful consideration.
- Consideration might be given to the re-blocking of the Bachelors' bedroom window, as in Morris's time, if only internally.
- For the contents of both rooms see May's memorandum.

9.2.12 Hall Chamber (now exhibition room and called, since the 1960s, the Marigold Room)

1964 Bedroom 3 & Passage
1939 [H&C] Passage Room
1926 Passage room
1893 Best bed room
1870 ? Bedroom 1
1833 Bedroom no. 4
1734 Chamber over the hall
1611 Chamber over the Hall

At the centre of the Period 1 house. The original form of the room is uncertain, and it may have extended further to the south: the N-S ceiling beam continues through the partition wall between this room and the bathroom beyond it, and is stopped against the bathroom's south wall. It is likely that this room was originally part of the hall chamber and has been taken out of it, possibly at period 3 when the house is known to have been subdivided.

Used as their own bed chamber by George Turner (d.1734) and his wife.²⁷ Originally a passage room, the hall chamber seems to have remained so until 1939 when a separate passage was partitioned off on the west side, apparently made up of re-used parts of a glazed enclosure from the north hall (q.v.).²⁸ This partition was removed in 1965-8 (period 6).

The original 4-centred fireplace surround remains and was revealed and photographed in the course of repairs in 1965; it was then covered in again and the present surround of c.1905 inserted.

Spanned by N-S & E-W beams, crossing S of the centre of the room; chamfered and stopped against walls save for the S beam which continues through the S wall. Heated in its north wall by a fireplace in the hall stack. This is cast-iron, in an English Art Nouveau style, of c.1905, inserted in period 6b.

27 PRO PROB.11/665 f.376 George Turner of Kelmscott

28 This was done in spite of the objections of the prospective tenant, E.Scott-Snell. OU archive LA/OXF 7A/2 20.August 1939 E.Scott-Snell 'I am very anxious to preserve the beauty and character of all the rooms. I would much rather not have the screen there at all, but keep the room just as it is – one of the best in the house, looking as it does onto both of the gardens.'



Fig. 48 The Hall Chamber (Marigold Room)



Fig. 49 Bathroom

Window seats inserted into window recesses; period 3? Door to S, painted, boarded, period 5. Door to N, painted, plain boards inside face, planted frame on outside, probably period 5. Modern elm floor, period 6.

Extract from May Morris's memorandum

PASSAGE ROOM|| Half-tester bed hung with Rose chintz (the bed Red House)|| Green wooden washstand and towel-horse – Red House gres de Flandres ware|| ‘Webb’ steel fender|| ‘Webb’ black framed mirror – Red House|| Chest of drawers late Sheraton? Veneered|| Small Morris table|| Old oak table|| Pink 2 ply ‘Morris’ curtains and valances|| Fine Persian tapestry carpet|| Persian rug|| Small oak book shelf|| Tall oak bookcase|| Tall standing mirror|| Sussex chairs|| One pair small ‘Webb’ candlesticks|| Red House framed embroidered figures W.M.|| “ design for Venus W.M.|| Pencil Drawing D.G.R. of Mrs Morris|| Oak chest

Significance

- A principal room of the Period 1 house, originally occupying the full width of the building and possibly extending as far as the south wall of the bathroom.

Issues

- The room was altered by Oxford University with the introduction of the partition from the North Hall to form a corridor on the west side.
- The plan was partially reinstated in 1965-8 when the partition was removed.
- The Art Nouveau iron fireplace is an alien feature introduced presumably for the convenience of the resident tenant/custodian.
- The Period 1 fireplace apparently survives behind it.
- The relationship between this room and the later closet (on the site of the bathroom) is no longer clear.

Policy

- The Art Nouveau fire surround should be removed and consideration given to the display of his period 1 fireplace.
- As there is little prospect of an authentic restoration of this room its use as an exhibition room should probably continue. It is one of the

rooms that might usefully house objects from the main rooms and the attics removed in order to achieve a more authentic display of those important historic interiors.

9.2.13 Bathroom

- 1964 Bathroom
- 1939 [Davidson] Bathroom, old cupboard
- 1939 [H&C] Dressing room (adjoining Passage room)
- 1926 Wardrobe room
- 1870 ? closet
- 1833 Closet [adjoining Servant's room]

Probably taken out of the original hall chamber (q.v.) whose southern beam spans this room. A closet or dressing room from the date of its creation until 1939/40, when converted to a bathroom. No window is shown in photographs taken in 1921 or earlier; the present window inserted c.1965 replacing an earlier, smaller window probably inserted in 1939-40.

Significance

- The room may correspond to the closet or wardrobe room mentioned in the C19 and C20 sources quoted above.

Issues

- The window introduced first by Oxford University represented an unfortunate alteration in the centre of the elevation of the Manor made famous by Gere's illustration to *News from Nowhere*. It allowed the closet to become the bathroom.
- The alteration and enlargement of this window in 1965-8 reflected the perceived needs of the custodian's accommodation.

Policy

- The window should be closed up to restore the integrity of the east front.
- A dark room in this position could be useful for museum storage or display of light-sensitive material.

9.2.14 Jenny's Room

1964 bedroom 4
1926 Jenny's room
1870 Servant's room
1833 Servant's bedroom
1611 ? Servants chamber

A narrow room occupying the eastern part of the space over the kitchen and divided off from a lobby at the landing of the south stair. It was probably the servant's bedroom listed in the 1870 and 1833 inventories, but its identification as the same in 1611 is tentative. It is more likely that this division is a later alteration and that the south stair originally gave into a room occupying the whole of the space south of the hall chamber, but if so it is not known when the alteration was made. Morris described it as 'a little room ... partitioned in modern times from a lobby' but it is not known why he thought this was so.

A fireplace is shown here in 1939 (Davidson) but it is not known whether the flue that heats it is original (i.e. period 1) or a later alteration: the present surround is of c.1905 and was inserted in period 6b. If the space was always heated, then the room and the adjoining lobby was presumably a passage bedroom similar to William Morris's room in the northern part of the house.

Morris described it as 'having its glazing almost wholly of old quarries.'

Named, presumably, from its being Jenny Morris's bedroom on her visits to the Manor.

Extract from May Morris's memorandum

JENNY'S ROOM|| Small 'Webb' bed from Red House|| Tripod washstand and fixings from William Morris's Room at Hammersmith|| Black 'Webb' table|| Oak hanging bookcase from Hammersmith.

Significance

- Possibly the servant's chamber mentioned in the 1611 inventory (this seems uncertain)
- Jenny Morris's bedroom

Issues

- The room has lost its original joinery
- The Art Nouveau fireplace is an alien intrusion
- The form of the original fireplace is unknown

Policy

- The fire surround should be removed and what lies behind it should be carefully investigated.
 - Consider whether the room is suitable as an exhibition space.
-

9.2.15 Lobby

History

1964 Landing
926 Passage [by Wardrobe room]

This space extends from the south door of the Hall Chamber to the south stair, and was formed through alterations of unknown date. It may originally have included the space now occupied by Jenny's room (q.v.)

Description

Visible structural timber is of period 6.

Extract from May Morris's memorandum

PASSAGE|| Embroidered wool hangings Red House

Significance

- This space is now redolent chiefly of the 1965 restoration, although its plan is partially historical.

Issues

- Total loss of historic joinery

Policy

- Useful for the display of light-sensitive material



Fig. 50 Jenny's Room



Fig. 51 Lobby



Fig. 52 Cheese Room



Fig. 53 Cheese Room

9.2.16 Cheese Room

History

1964 Bedroom 2
1939 [H&C] Cheese Room
1926 Cheese room
1893 Cheese room
1870 Cheese room
1833 Cheese room
1611 ? Storehouse

Morris perpetuated the name – ‘a very pleasant room ... called the cheese-room when I first came to the house.’ So called at least since 1831, when it was used as such. Unheated, and perhaps to be identified as the Storehouse of 1611.

The E-W ceiling beam projects a short distance through the partition between the Cheese Room and the lobby to its east. Presumably this represents the removal of an existing bearer in the 1960s.

Modern elm floorboards; modern ‘Willow Bough’ wallpaper.

Original ceiling beams.

Extract from May Morris’s memorandum

CHEESE ROOM|| Wooden ‘Webb’ bed – Red House|| Washstand, horse and dressing table – Red House gres de Flandres ware|| Sheraton commode|| ‘Webb’ Black armchair|| Large carved oak chest|| Morris two-ply carpet|| ‘Webb’ black table (flaps)|| Sussex chairs|| Large old mirror – Webb dressing mirror|| Chest of drawers (Jacobean?)|| One pair of ‘Webb’ candlesticks|| writing table with flaps (W.M.’s writing table at Queen Square)|| Eleven E. Burne-Jones drawings of ‘The Months’|| D.G.R.’s design for Pomegranate and Lily cushion in Panelled Room

Significance

- A room whose nineteenth-century use reflected the working life of the Manor as a farmhouse.

Issues

- Loss of original joinery in the restoration of 1965-8
- The unblocking in 1965-8 of the south window.

Policy

- Given the removal of so many of its historic details this room is another potentially useful space for exhibitions.
- Alternatively the May Morris memorandum does list a large number of identifiable furnishings which could legitimately be shown here.

– Second Floor –

9.2.17 Attics

The attic comprises a large space over the original hall range, a second large space over the original north range, a smaller space over the original SW wing and two small rooms over the Period 2 1665-70 NE block. In all the butt purlin roof is exposed.

The principal roof timbers are of elm throughout, but there has been very extensive repair and renewal, chiefly in 1965-8.

The roof over the original hall range is gabled to east and west. These gables have however been raised, probably in Period 2: empty trenches in the purlins show that the principals have been replaced more widely and thus now rise to a higher peak.

The southern stair rises to this space at its south end, and there is a fireplace in the south stack. The collars to this roof have simple moulded bracket-like features to the soffit: the level of ornament and the provision for heating suggests that the roof space may have been intended as some kind of simple gallery.

In 1965-8 a new stair, with alternating treads, was formed at the northern end of the house in the space formerly occupied by a w.c. It is suggested above that this space may itself have been formed in the eighteenth century to house a stair from first to second floor, though the form of such a stair is not known.

West end partitioned off to form an office.

The north east range contains two small bedrooms. These are fitted up with simple green-painted bedsteads, washstands and chests probably designed

by Ford Maddox Brown. One set of these probably came from the former Bachelors' bedroom in the bay of the Tapestry Room.

E.H.New's drawing of the roof in 1895, and the photographs of Frederick Evans's photographs on which it was probably based, powerfully evoke the condition of the house after three hundred years.

In *Gossip about an Old House on the Upper Thames*, Morris wrote of the attics:

'...leaving all this we come to a newel staircase, which comes up from the kitchen, and leads us up in the attics, i.e. the open roof under the slates, a very sturdy collar beam roof of elm often unsquared; it is most curiously divided under most of the smaller gables into little chambers where no doubt people, perhaps the hired field labourers, slept in old time: the bigger space is open, and is a fine place for children to play in, and has charming views east, west and north: but much of it is too curious for description.'

In *News from Nowhere* he wrote of 'the strange and quaint garrets amongst the great timbers of the roof, where of old time the tillers and herdsmen of the manor slept, but which a-nights seemed now by the small size of the beds, and the litter of useless and disregarded matters – bunches of dying flowers, feathers of birds, shells of starling's eggs, caddis worms in mugs, and the like – seemed for the time to be inhabited by children.'

Significance

- Part of the house where the ancient character has largely escaped the domestic alterations that have affected all the other rooms and therefore of special interest. Its remarkable beauty in the late nineteenth century is illustrated by Frederick Evans's famous photographs.

Issues

- The 1965-8 restoration of the roof has altered the texture and substance of the carpentry, notably the rafters which are for the most part new.
- The introduction of the new staircase with its softwood balustrading has intruded in the most beautiful part of the space (chosen by Evans for

his important plate). Plaster and laths have been stripped from the funnel like end of the garret valley gutter that forms the central element in the Evans view.

- The thick layers of whitewash that contributed to its beauty in the nineteenth century have been lost although thinner coats of limewash were applied to the new work as part of the restoration.
- The use of this place for the display of textiles has involved the introduction of unsympathetic lighting.
- The over-heating of light fittings here has been reported.
- The need to protect the textiles from daylight has led to the introduction of blinds.
- Furniture of various kinds and pictures etc. detract from the simple beauty of the space.
- Ad hoc but very necessary handrails have been introduced recently on the winding stair.

Policy

- The attics should be returned as nearly as possible to their condition in the Evans photographs.
- Except for the garrets, the attics should be largely cleared of artefacts which could find exhibition space in the vacant rooms on the first floor.
- The roof timbers should eventually receive several more layers of limewash.
- The valley that projects between the doors to the two garrets in the main attic should be lathed and plastered (as in Evans's photograph).
- The intrusive character of the new stair balustrade should be addressed and eventually replaced or modified to reduce its impact.
- Following the removal of the textiles, the blinds should always be completely raised on visiting days so that the 'charming views, east, west and north' to which Morris referred can be enjoyed by the public (this will compensate visitors for the loss of views caused by conservation blinds in the other show rooms).
- The light fittings and their baffles should be disconnected and removed.
- More sympathetic lighting should be introduced.
- Morris remarked that it 'it is a fine place for children to play' should be given due consideration in the arrangement and use of the space.
- In due course introduce better-looking handrails on the winding stair.
- The revised display policy for the attics should be explained to visitors in an effective manner.



Fig. 54 Divided star to attic, introduced 1964-8



Fig. 55 The north-east attic (vue by Frederick Evans 1896?)



Fig. 56 The north-east attic



Fig. 57 The south attic

9.2.18 The Service Wing (Ground Floor)

The low wing running west at an angle to the body of the house was probably added in the 18th century. It has a timber pentice against the north face, to provide under-cover access to its several rooms from the main house. There are at present four principal cells within the wing. Working from the east, they are as follows:

Laundry

1964 Garage
1889 Dairy
1833 Lumber Room

Ceiled over, but probably originally open to the roof. There is no stair by which to access the roof space. E.H.New's bird's-eye view of 1895 shows a carriage door in the E end of the S wall; it is not known whether this was an original feature. This was walled up in 1964-7.

Adjoining rooms

1870 Dairy
1833 Dairy

Ceiled over as the laundry. Doorway to laundry in east wall blocked and room divided in 1965-68 to form cloakroom, boiler room and store, all with quarry tile floors.

Brewhouse

History

1870 Brewhouse
1833 Brewhouse

Built to accommodate the 'wet work' of the household – washing and brewing – and also to provide a bakehouse. Open to the roof to provide ventilation.

There is a central fireplace in the west wall, containing on the south side a deep bread oven; this projects into the workshop beyond the brewhouse to

the west. There is a large copper to the north of the fireplace, probably for brewing, and a smaller one to the east, probably for washing. There is a slab on brick piers against the south wall, and a sink against the north. The central tie across the open roof has on its east face two large hooks bolted through, possibly to hang carcasses for butchery. Stone flagged floor.

Significant features

- Fireplace & oven
- Coppers
- Butchery hooks
- Slab and sink

Workshop Beyond

1833 Hog Tub House

A large stone bulkhead in the SE corner contains the oven, projecting through the wall from the brewhouse. Open to the roof; concrete floor.

Significance

- The service range of any ancient house is an important document of its social and functional history.
- This range is interesting as part of the early eighteenth-century improvements to the house prior to its division into two tenements.

Issues

- Only the brewhouse survives in something like its original condition.
- Other rooms have become an office, volunteer rest room annex and w.c.

Policy

- The house today needs the functions which these rooms accommodate.
- It is however important to retain the historic character of the brewhouse interior.

Privy

An attractive building, probably late seventeenth century with a pyramidal roof and housing a three-seater elm latrine bench with hinged lids and dado. Timber window with leaded lights.

Significance

- Part of historic domestic arrangements of the Manor and an attractive part of the architectural setting of the garden.

Issues

- The joinery is deteriorating.

Policy

- The joinery should be repaired in this quinquennial.

Summer House

In the corner of the east garden. Stone tiled roof and elm boarded walls.

Significance

- An important feature of the garden and the witness of its past social use.

Issues

- Both the timber frame and the boarding are relatively fragile.

Policy

- Monitor condition and institute piecemeal repair as appropriate.



Fig. 58 The Brew house



Fig. 59 The Summerhouse



Fig. 60 The Privy

10. Gazetteer: Estate Buildings

10.1 The Buildings of the Farm

The two principal barns, flanking the home yard, closely resemble in their structural details the c.1665 work in the Manor House, and can be assumed to be of similar date. These two barns also resemble each other functionally. When built, it seems likely that the backwater of the river (mentioned above) was navigable, and it may be that water transport was important for the transport of the farm's likely produce of grain, hay, wool and cheese.

10.1.1 South Road Barn

The South Barn is aligned with the road to the east and gabled at each end. It has been relatively little altered. The construction, of rubble with battered walls and regular, alternating ashlar quoins, closely resembles that of the Phase II work of the Manor House. The building is in two parts, divided by a full-height masonry wall, though apparently of one build. The northern part is an open threshing barn. The southern part is of three storeys, with a wing projecting to the west. Drip moulds to two window (see below) also resemble those to the Manor House, and indicate an unusual desire to enhance the status of the building.

The identification of the building as the Barley Barn of 1833 derives from its sequence in the inventory (which seems to have been taken from west to east) and from its containing grain that had not yet been threshed.

The building was the subject of a report by the Oxford Archaeological Unit in 1995.

South Road Barn: Northern part

1833 ? Wheat barn

The northern part of the barn is a stone-built, threshing barn, with double doors to east and west.

The roof, of elm with straight ties and collars, queen struts and butt purlins, is probably original to the building.

There has been minimal intervention by the Society other than necessary repairs and the installation of a polythene screen within the area of the western threshing doors, in order to light the building while excluding the weather when the doors are open. A simple exhibition was installed in 1995 involving no physical alterations and enabling the functional simplicity of the building still to be appreciated.

The identification of this barn as the 1833 Wheat Barn is uncertain, though its location would be convenient for the storage of grain to be sold off the farm.

South Road Barn: Southern part

1833 ? Cart Horse Stables
& ? Over the Cart Horse Stables

The southern part of the building is of three storeys, reached by a stone stair reached from an external door from the west and contained in a projection within the body of the barn. The ground floor contained stables, and may be identifiable with the Cart Horse Stable of 1833 (though these may have been at the southern end of the south-east barn (q.v.)). This has stone setts on the floor, laid to accommodate stalls and mangers against the south wall. On the upper floors the internal walls are thinly plastered, and though it is possible that these rooms may have housed farm hinds it is more likely that they were intended as wool or cheese stores with some fodder for the horses below. There is a blocked taking-in door on the first floor in the south gable.

Two window openings in this part of the building – in the east front on the ground floor, and on the first floor in the north side of the west wing – have ashlar frames and stone hood moulds resembling those to the Manor House.



Fig. 61 The South Road barn from the south west



Fig. 62 The South Road barn from the north east



Fig. 63 The South Road barn interior



Fig. 64 The Farmyard



Fig. 65 The South-West barn (tearoom)

Two doors were pierced in the ground floor, south wall in the 20th century. Upper floors have been almost wholly renewed in the recent past. Beyond these doors, on the south side of the building, are remains of twentieth-century pig sties.

The identification of the accommodation in the southern part of the building with the Cart Horse stables of 1833 is tentative, and these may (perhaps more probably) have been at the eastern end of the south-east barn (q.v.).

Significance

- A fine seventeenth-century barn in something close to its original state and as such an increasing rarity in this part of England where so many have recently been converted.
- An important witness of the seventeenth-century Turners' farming activity.
- One of few buildings at Kelmscott which remain largely as Morris found them.
- A building whose details were evidently of interest to Philip Webb who imitated the monolithic arches of its gable slits in his Memorial Cottages at Kelmscott.

Issues

- The quinquennial inspection of 2007 indicated a number of necessary repairs. Deterioration since then has been slow but repair is needed to prevent ingress of water and further decay of masonry and timber.

Policy

- Every effort should be made to protect the character of the building as it is. This means that any change in use should maintain its traditional character and details, inside and out.
- The repair issues should be addressed possibly as part of a larger scheme for the use of the building.
- The replacement of the existing softwood doors with a more traditional closure in oak or ash would significantly complement this exceptionally handsome vernacular building.

10.1.2 South West Barn (tearoom and lavatories)

The South West barn is roughly aligned with the South Road Barn, gabled at the southern end but

hipped to the north. Construction is similar, with ashlar quoins and rubble walls and identical coping to the gable, though the building is less tall and has possibly been reduced in height: the butt-purlin roof shows extensive signs of reconstruction and incorporates much re-used timber. The building is in three sections, divided by full height masonry walls.

Though superficially different in form from the South Road Barn, there are considerable points of similarity in addition to the construction. There is a similar storeyed section to the south, with a wing projecting west. To the north there is a small stable, entered from both east and west as is that of the south road barn. There is however no attempt to use architectural detail to enhance the status of the building.

The identification of the building with the Barley Barn of the 1833 inventory derives from its sequence in the inventory and from the likelihood that (from its location) it was used to store crops to be consumed on the farm rather than sent away.

A tea room was established in this barn c.1990, with a kitchen and w.c. in the south part.

South West (Tea Room) Barn: Central Section

2004 tea room
1833 ? Barley barn

The central section had barn doors facing the yard on the east; these have a concrete lintel to the head. There is no corresponding door to the west, showing this never to have been a threshing barn. The butt purlin roof has been very extensively repaired, and though it is likely that the building is overall in its original form it is conceivable that it has been reduced in height.

The identification of this building as the 1833 Barley Barn is uncertain. Its location would be convenient for the storage of grain to be consumed on the farm, although the contents at that date suggest that the Barley Barn may have been a threshing barn, which this is probably not.

South West (Tea Room) Barn: Northern section

2004 w.c.

1833 ? Nag stables ? Tie-up house

A small stable, entered from east and west, the west door now blocked. Part of the floor with stone setts remains visible; a modern floor has been laid above the northern part to accommodate a men's lavatory.

South West (Tea Room) Barn: Southern section

2004 kitchen

1833 ? cart horse stables & over.

The southern part of the barn is of two storeys, gabled to the south, and with a western wing. Stone setts remain to part of the eastern floor and may extend further beneath modern surfaces. The original purpose is not known; there is a broad cart opening in the east wall with jambs that appear to be of the original period of building, though the segmental arch that now spans this opening may be later in date. There is no evidence of stairs to the upper floor, but an external door in the angle between the body of the building and the west wing corresponds to the stair door in the South Road barn, and may have provided similar external staircase access. In 2004 only a part of this floor survived, but it is clear from empty joist sockets that the entire area was floored in originally. As with the South Road barn, the original purpose of the upper floor is unknown, but may similarly have provided storage for wool or other perishable products.

The location close to the cart house may indicate that in 1833 it served as the cart horse stable. On the other hand this seems incompatible with the broad cart opening in the east wall. This broad opening may alternatively suggest that in 1833 it was the gig house, though the space seems large for the purpose. The gig house may have been in some part of the farm buildings that has since been demolished.

Significance

- One of the two principal seventeenth-century agricultural buildings at Kelmscott.

Issues

- The building has been converted.
- The tearoom use has necessarily domesticated the central section.
- It is however not insulated and too cold for comfortable use in the shoulder and winter months.
- It is too small for the volume of visitors on busy open days and this has necessitated the use of a supplementary marquee.
- The kitchen occupies an interesting subsidiary space with a fine roof that cannot be shown to the public.
- The lavatories in their partitions and floors have covered historic surfaces, structure and fittings and have subdivided the space.
- The quinquennial inspection indicates that the roof has been subject to a good deal of movement but is stable at the moment.
- In 2007 there was no fire detection system.

Policy

- Reconsider the current use of the building and explore ways of both improving the catering use and making more of the historic character of the structure.
- Introduce insulation in between the rafters. The treatment of the kitchen roof indicates how this might be achieved.
- Consider in the longer term how building on the footprint of the demolished Home Yard byre (q.v. 6.19.8) might be used to improve the showing of the building and the effectiveness of the tearoom by accommodating some its uses eg. kitchen and possibly lavatories. Alternatively such a structure could provide extra seating.
- Continue to monitor the roof and its supporting masonry.
- Install a fire detection system.

10.1.3 Granary and byre

Granary

2004 Shop

1833 New Granary & Cart House

Described as 'new' in 1833; in 1974 a stone was found inscribed CT 1832 (for Charles Turner.)



Fig. 66 Tea Room



Fig. 67 Tea Room kitchen roof



Fig. 68 Granary (shop) exterior



Fig. 70 Shop



Fig. 69 Granary exterior



Fig. 71 Granary byre

Much altered, but originally providing open housing for carts on the ground floor, and granary above. There is a former cattle byre on the south side.

The main building is of four bays, gabled to east and west. Walls are of coursed rubble to east, west and south and brick to the north. Internal wall faces are lined in brick. The upper floor is reached by a stone external stair against the west gable. The butt purlin roof is covered with stone slates.

The building was originally open to the north on the ground floor, with the upper wall face carried on timber lintels spanning four openings (four carts are listed in the 1833 inventory). This north wall has been much altered, with two broad openings, now boarded in, cut into the upper floor and with the lower floor enclosed in brick in the 20th century. Probably also in the 20th century part of the floor was removed and double doors inserted into the east gable, probably for a garage.

A shop was installed on the ground floor in 1999-2000.

Byre

The byre is a lean-to against the south wall of the Brick Barn, open fronted with a Welsh slate roof. The structure is largely of re-used timber. The date is uncertain; it is shown on the 1876 1:2500 OS map but is necessarily later than 1832 when the Brick Barn was built. Fronting the building is a yard, paved with stones, enclosed with slate slabs and containing stone cattle troughs.

Significance

- The granary is important at Kelmscott as evidence of the Turners' agricultural activity in the nineteenth century.
- The byre and yard are interesting for their use of stone fencing slabs and are relatively unaltered.

Issues

- The granary has been much altered.
- It now accommodates the shop.
- The shop store does not communicate well with the display/trading area.
- More trading space would be beneficial.

- The byre and its yard are in poor condition, especially the roof which is currently propped.

Policy

- The granary functions well as a shop.
- Some refitting and re-organisation of the space may be necessary to improve these functions.
- The byre and its yard should be repaired.

10.1.4 Paddock Barn

A barn of mixed construction and of uncertain purpose and age. The east side is timber framed and weatherboarded above a low rubble wall; the west side is partly rubble walled, partly similar to the east side. The north gable is of masonry, the south framed and pierced by a broad cart door. The roof is now stone slated, but its steep angle suggests that it may originally have been thatched. It is probably of more than one date, but may be of 16th/17th century origin.

The purpose of the building is unknown, though (as with many agricultural buildings) it probably served a variety of functions. It has been suggested that it may have provided animal shelter, that it may have housed fish nets, osiers or other objects connected with river activity, or that it may have been a fruit store. A curry comb found in the building indicates that at some date it housed a horse, while the cart doors at the south end indicate access for a vehicle.

The building appears in George Jacks's plaque of William Morris set in the front of 1 & 2 Memorial Cottages.

A report on the building was prepared by David Clark and members of the Oxfordshire Building Recording Group in 2004.

Significance

- An attractive and early timber frame building of a traditional kind that would have been especially pleasing to Morris.

Issues

- Its condition gives serious cause for concern as was noted in the last quinquennial inspection, a view that is reinforced by the latest survey.

Policy

- Full conservation repairs should be undertaken in the near future.
 - Part of the barn is used as the gardener's shed. This is a suitable use and consideration should be given to the future use of the remaining portion.
-

10.1.5 Dovecote and stable

The dovecot is a square structure of unknown date, perhaps of the sixteenth or seventeenth century, close to the north end of the south-east barn and forming with it the western side of the Home Yard. It is of rendered rubble, with un-dressed angles, and gabled to east and west. There is a central, square lantern with openings for doves. At present (2004) there are doves in the upper part of the building only; an inserted floor divides the upper part from the ground floor which contains stables, perhaps inserted in the 19th century.

The line of a roof slope is visible descending to the east on the north side of the building. It is difficult to interpret this, since any substantial building that might have abutted the dovecote on this side would have encroached on the lane between it and the Manor House.

Dovecote

It seems likely that when built there were nesting boxes descending to the ground on all four inner walls: these remain on the upper floor, and on the ground floor in the western part of the north wall.

Stable

It is possible that the stable is the Nag Stable of the 1833 inventory, but it is more likely that the present fittings are later in date and that the dovecot does not appear in that inventory because it only contained fixtures.

Other wall surfaces to the ground floor have been plastered, and the southern part of the building lined with tongue-and-groove boarding to provide two stalls for horses. These stalls have lost their central division but retain their mangers.

There is a corn bin (?) in the NE angle.

Significance

- An important feature of the seventeenth-century farmstead and a picturesque component of the group much enjoyed by Morris in the view from the Tapestry Room's southern window.
- The alteration of the ground floor to make a stable in the nineteenth century adds to its interest as a document of the Turners' domestic life.

Issues

- None

Policy

- Maintain the building in its present condition.
-

10.1.6 Demolished buildings of the yard

The 1879 to 1910 1:2500 OS maps show a line of (probable) cow byres or sheep pens opening towards the Home Yard on the south side, with small covered yards: in plan these resemble those that survive against the south side of the granary (q.v.). The E.H. New bird's-eye view shows these as a line of low buildings, probably with a thatched roof. There were five cows in the Home Yard in 1833.

Another range of byres on the north side of the Home Yard with a single pitch corrugated roof is shown in photographs of 1964. This was demolished in 1973, the southern range at an unknown date.

There is an unroofed building to the south of the South Road Barn.

Significance

- Lost features of the farmyard.

Issues

- The open appearance of the farmyard today differs from the layout that Morris knew.
- Space is at a premium at the property. The vacant sites of these buildings and their known form represent a precedent for new building in a traditional style to accommodate facilities. The unroofed building to the south of the South Road Barn also has potential.



Fig. 72 Paddock Barn exterior



Fig. 74 Dovecote and stable



Fig. 73 Paddock Barn interior



Fig. 75 Manor Road Barn



Fig. 76 Manor Road Barn interior

Policy

- In future plans, note the opportunity that these vacant sites represent.
-

10.1.7 Manor Road Barn

1833 ? Barley Barn

A stone rubble threshing barn with double cart doors to the east (road) side and a single broad door to a gable on the west. Probably 18th century. The barn was reslated in 1887.¹

When the Manor was being repaired in the 1960s it was anticipated that this barn would form the visitors' first point of access to the site, a proposal linked to the intended main visitor entrance door and new porch on the north side of the house.

Significance

- A fine traditional eighteenth-century barn in a prominent position.
- A notable addition to the farm by the Turner family.

Issues

- Quinquennial Inspection repairs. Although not an immediate priority repairs to the roof will be necessary in due course and will be substantial.
- The roof structure has been compromised visually by modern softwood supporting timbers.
- It stands in a potentially useful position in terms of visitor management although it is relatively remote from other visitor facilities.

Policy

- Address the quinquennial repair recommendations.
- Make sure that the potential of the building is kept under review when considering the visitor experience and the needs of the property.

- Cottages -

10.1.8 Manor Garden Cottage

Manor Garden Cottage is a stone rubble-built cottage of two storeys with a slate roof, and probably of 17th century date extended in the 18th century. At the south end is a stack heating the ground floor, with a bread oven extending to the exterior. Beside the fireplace is a narrow winder stair rising to the first floor.

In the 1880s this was the home of the Comley family, who acted as caretakers and probably as general factotums at the Manor House.

Minor repairs to roof and chimney are documented in 1887²

Significance

- A well preserved vernacular building of early date and an important contributor to the overall architectural group that composes the Manor.

Issues

- Nothing of importance at the time of writing.

Policy

- Maintain the building.
-

10.1.9 Memorial Cottages

Extract from a paper on the Cottages by Peter Cormack and John Maddison prepared for the Council of the Society in 2010.

Both pairs of early 20th-century cottages were built as memorials. They are situated to the north-west of the Manor, on the left-hand side of the road which leads to the Plough Inn. Nos. 1 and 2 Memorial Cottages were designed by William Morris's close friend Philip Webb (1831-1915) and Nos. 1 and 4 Manor Cottages were designed by Ernest Gimson (1864-1919), one of Morris's most accomplished disciples in the Arts & Crafts Movement. May

1 Reading MERL MS 1971 A2/9: 'Barn by Mrs. Comleys'.

2 MERL Reading MS 1971 A2/9

Morris, in a letter of 5 February 1926 concerning her proposed bequest to Oxford University, wrote that the cottages 'are really rather specially fine, and of course the Webb ones have become historic', adding that 'the almost entirely unspoilt appearance of the village is due to my Father's and also my care'.³ The four cottages commemorating William and Jane Morris are thus an integral part of the Kelmscott estate as it evolved in the early twentieth century.

The northernmost pair, 1 and 2 Memorial Cottages, were Philip Webb's last architectural commission. They were commissioned by Mrs Jane Morris (1839-1914) to commemorate her husband William Morris (1834-1896). Webb's designs (for which he characteristically charged no fee) date from 1899-1900 and the cottages themselves were built in 1902-03.⁴ Construction was supervised by Webb's former assistant George Jack (1855-1931), who chose a local builder, Joseph Bowley of Lechlade. Jack also modelled the sculpture of 'William Morris in the Home Mead', based on a sketch by Philip Webb, which adorns the main gable facing the road.⁵ The cottages are built of coursed rubble with ashlar dressings and stone slates.

Philip Webb was not only one of the most influential architects of his time, but a versatile and skilled designer who, like his friend William Morris, both pioneered the philosophy of the Arts & Crafts Movement and was an exemplar for its adherents. He was one of the founding partners of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. in 1861 and continued to design for the firm after its reorganization as Morris & Company in 1875.

3 Ibid., 87-88.

4 Webb's initial ideas for the cottages are outlined in a letter to Jane Morris (24 June 1899, BL Add. MS 453342, Morris Papers, vol. 1). See also Webb's 'Certificate Book of Works in Progress', entry for 21 May 1900 (Private Collection).

5 Webb's original idea for the sculpture 'Morris in the Home Mead' was to have been a 'rudimentary tree and a couple of birds, to signify to those who cared "the town of the tree"'. 'When all birds sing / In the town of the tree' are lines from Morris's poem, 'For the bed at Kelmscott', written for the embroidered bed-hangings on his own bed at the Manor. Although modelled (in clay or plaster) by Jack, the stone-carving was executed by Laurence A. Turner (1864-1957). George Jack had previously worked at Kelmscott in May 1898, when he supervised the installation of William Morris's gravestone, designed by Webb, in the churchyard. See: Amy Gaimster, George Jack 1855-1931. Architect and Designer-Craftsman (London: William Morris Gallery, 2006), 42.

Alongside Morris, Webb was a founding member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and he largely originated the approach to building conservation developed by S.P.A.B. in the twentieth century. His own architectural work is characterised by rational planning, the use of the best available (preferably local) materials and avoidance of ostentatious ornament, with features creatively derived from vernacular building and craftsmanship. Modest and scrupulous in professional dealings, he told W. R. Lethaby 'I never begin to be satisfied until my work looks commonplace'. Hermann Muthesius recognised the key role of Webb in the evolution of British design in the later nineteenth century in a book that was to influence the mainstream of modern design in Continental Europe, *Das englische Haus* (Berlin, 1904-05):

There can be no doubt that he occupies a position of the first importance in the history of English architecture. The fact is readily acknowledged by everyone with a knowledge of architecture in England, though the less expert might not recognise the fact without a special effort ... Philip Webb was from the first distinguished by great restraint in the use of forms, combined with a thoroughly independent – an independence amounting almost to genius – but almost puritanically simple design... he is the embodiment of maximum honesty, seeking to appear less rather than more than he is.⁶

Webb's first independent architectural commission was Red House, Bexleyheath, built for William Morris in 1859-60 (and now owned by the National Trust). His last commission, undertaken immediately before his retirement in 1900, was the Memorial Cottages at Kelmscott which commemorate his lifelong friend. It is clear from his correspondence with Jane Morris and with George Jack that he took great pains to ensure that they would be worthy of their setting. He wrote to Mrs Morris that 'the broader in effect the 2 cottages could be made the less of upstart in character would be the result', so they were not treated

6 from Janet Seligman's translation of Muthesius's text, published as *The English House* (New York: Rizzoli, 1979), 18-19.



Fig. 77 Manor Garden Cottage



Fig. 78 Memorial Cottages - gable



Fig. 79 Carved relief on Memorial Cottages

individually but set under ‘two simple gabled roofs crossing each other’.⁷ In this, as in the reduction of window-mouldings to a minimum, it is clear that Webb was keen to avoid the cottages appearing to be a ‘miniature version’ of the Manor, whilst at the same time ensuring that in general form and materials they relate to their context. Lethaby described them, in terms that Webb and Morris might well have used, as ‘stout and trim’.⁸ Webb’s recent biographer, Dr Sheila Kirk, called the pair of dwellings ‘an entirely satisfactory addition to its surroundings’.⁹

Although not unique in Webb’s oeuvre, the cottages are relatively unusual in being designed as working-class housing. In fact Webb himself retired from London to live in a very modest country cottage at Worth in Sussex at the time of designing the Kelmscott building. His thoughts on what would be his own home (until his death in 1915), which he shared with a housekeeper and her young children, doubtless influenced the functional aspects of the Kelmscott cottages’ design.

Significance (repeated from 4.16)

- The cottages are significant examples of the patronage of the Morris family.
- They are memorials.
- They are exceptionally important late example of the architecture of Philip Webb.
- They contribute significantly to the charm and historic interest of the village and therefore contribute directly to the experience of a visit to Kelmscott.
- The land that they occupy preserves and controls the approach to the Manor and constitutes part of its wider setting.
- Occupation of these cottages by village residents contributes to the sustainability of the village community.

Issues

- The introduction of flat-roofed outbuildings in the yards by the Society has compromised the

original design (although they are not intrusive in significant views of the buildings).

- Small ironwork details in windows etc. are deteriorating and have not been reinstated.

Policy

- Carefully maintain the buildings and have special regard for their details including metalwork fittings.
- Reconsider the flat-roofed extensions in future plans.

10.1.10 1 & 4 Manor Cottages

Extract from Morris Memorial Cottages and Manor Cottages (Nos 1 and 4) at Kelmscott a paper for the Council of the Society of Antiquaries Peter Cormack and John Maddison written in 2010.

1 and 4 Manor Cottages, commissioned by May Morris as a memorial to her mother, were designed by Ernest Gimson in 1914. Their construction in 1914-15 was supervised by one of his former pupils, Walter L. Gissing (1891-1916)¹⁰; the local builder was George Swinford of Filkins¹¹. Like Webb’s Memorial Cottages, Gimson’s are of coursed rubble with ashlar dressings and roofed with stone slates. As well as designing the cottages, Gimson bordered the adjoining land – between the cottages and the Manor itself – with a low wall of stone slabs held together with wrought iron bands (a Cotswold vernacular feature normally used to form enclosures for farm animals)¹².

Along with the Village Hall commissioned by May Morris (designed by Gimson in 1919 but not built until 1934), and the council houses north of the Plough Inn (built in 1950 by Joe Swinford, brother of George Swinford who built Gimson’s Manor

7 Philip Webb letter to Jane Morris, 24 June 1899 (see note 3 above).

8 W. R. Lethaby, Philip Webb and his Work (London: Oxford University Press, 1935) p. 219.

9 Sheila Kirk, Philip Webb. Pioneer of Arts & Crafts Architecture (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2005), pp. 211-212.

10 Walter Gissing was the son of the novelist George Gissing. He was killed at Gommecourt while serving with 9th Battalion, The Rifle Brigade, on 1st July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme.

11 J. Fay and R. Martin, eds., The Jubilee Boy: the Life and Recollections of George Swinford of Filkins (Lechlade: Filkins Press, 1987), 39.

12 The authors are grateful for information about this and other aspects of Gimson’s work at Kelmscott to Dr David Pendery, author of ‘The Architectural Works of Ernest Gimson 1864-1919’ (Sheffield University PhD thesis, 1998).

Cottages), the four cottages by Webb and Gimson are the principal 20th-century buildings in the village.xi¹³

Significance (repeated from 4.1.6)

- The cottages are significant examples of the patronage of the Morris family.
- They are memorials.
- They are exceptionally important examples of the architecture of Ernest Gimson .
- They contribute significantly to the charm and historic interest of the village and therefore contribute directly to the experience of a visit to Kelmscott.
- The land that they occupy preserves and controls the approach to the Manor and constitutes part of its wider setting.
- Occupation of these cottages by village residents contributes to the sustainability of the village community.

Issues

- As with Memorial Cottages there is a problem with the preservation of small metalwork details of windows etc.

Policy

- Carefully maintain the buildings and their details
- The roof of No 1 will need to be re-tiled in due course (see quinquennial inspection).

10.1.11 Small barn in the Central Field

A small barn of rubble with ashlar quoins and stone slate roof. Originally open fronted to the south, subsequently enclosed with rough framing and weatherboarding. It has a hard brick floor.

Probably built as a byre. It is said to have been built to house May Morris's pony, though it appears to be of earlier date. It is not shown on the 1st-3rd editions 1:25,000 O.S. maps and does lie close to the area enclosed by Jane Morris c.1912 as a vegetable garden.

13 Julian Munby, 'Vernacular Architecture in Kelmscott' in A. Crossley, T. Hassall & P. Salway (eds.), William Morris's Kelmscott: Landscape and History (Bollington: Windgather Press, 2007), 92.

Significance

- A simple and pleasing country building whose history is uncertain.

Issues

- Adjacent tree threatens to damage the roof.

Policy

- Continue to prune the adjacent tree.
- Monitor and maintain the building.

10.1.12 Garage Barn

A broad, low, open-ended barn with rubble walls and modern roof carrying artificial stone slates. It opens onto the road and was probably originally built to house two carts.

Significance

- Significant only in the sense that it makes an unobtrusive contribution to the village scene.

Issues

- The quinquennial notes structural movement.

Policy

- Monitor structural movement and take appropriate action.

10.1.13 Railway Carriage in Hunt's Paddock

An old railway carriage of unknown date, history or purpose stands in an enclosure NW of the North Paddock.

Significance

- Unknown.

Issues

- Condition deteriorating.

Policy

- Investigate significance with railway specialist (National Railway Museum, Swindon).
- Prevent further deterioration with some basic maintenance including removal of saplings etc.



Fig. 80 1-4 Manor Cottages



Fig. 81 Stone slab fence bordering Central Field next to I-4 Manor Cottages

- Consider whether there is any future potential use for this structure here or at another site on the property (eg. shelter for those supervising the leased car park on visiting days).

10.1.14 Bridge

This links the Manor's Paddock to the water meadow. Its date is unknown but possibly eighteenth century.

Significance

- A structure presumably put up by the Turners in the eighteenth century.

Issues

- It is deteriorating.

Policy

- Clear away vegetation and repair
-

10.1.15 Boundary Walls

There are boundary walls bordering the various paddocks and fields outside the Manor and its garden.

Hunts Paddock

A rubble wall.

Significance

- A traditional field boundary.

Issues

- It is deteriorating quite rapidly. See quinquennial inspection.

Policy

- Repair

Central Field

A stone slab fence possibly by Ernest Gimson who built the adjacent Manor Cottages. The slabs are

supported by iron estate fencing at the back. The construction resembles the stone troughs in the byre yard south of the granary.

Significance

- A pleasing and unusual feature of the village scene possibly by a distinguished architect.

Issues

- None at the time of writing.

Policy

- Maintain

North Paddock

Rubble boundary wall to the south and north sides.

Significance

- An eighteenth or nineteenth-century field boundary. Possibly earlier where it adjoins the garden of Manor Farm.

Issues

- The wall is in poor condition.
- Ownership is uncertain especially in the vicinity of Manor Farm.

Policy

- Establish ownership
- Undertake repairs as appropriate.

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- OU Oxford University
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